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AN EXAMINATION
INTO THE ORIGIN AND CONTINUANCE OF THE
DISCONTENTS IN IRELAND,
AND
THE TRUE CAUSE OF THE REBELLION:
BEING A FAITHFUL NARRATIVE OF THE
PARTICULAR SUFFERINGS
OF THE
IRISH PEASANTRY:

WITH
A PLAN
WHICH, IF ADOPTED, CANNOT FAIL TO BRING BACK THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
INSURGENTS TO THEIR ALLEGIANCE; WITHOUT INJURY TO THE
PROTESTANT INTEREST; OR, WHAT THEY NEVER ASKED,
EMANCIPATION.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED
A SPECIMEN OF IRISH ANECDOTES,
WHICH THE EDITOR PROPOSES, ON A FUTURE OCCASION,
TO ENLARGE.

— A bold peasantry,—a country's pride,
When once destroy'd—can never be supply'd.
GOLDSMITH.

BY **WILLIAM BINGLEY,**
FOURTEEN YEARS A RESIDENT IN IRELAND.

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TO THE
CRITICS.

SANGUINE as I am to *disarm* the Irish insurgents, by an amelioration of their condition, I have more reason, because more to fear, should I not first *disarm* you. For this purpose, I beg leave to mention, that, in the year 1773, I went into Ireland to collect arrears due on a Newspaper concern; and that, from a slight perusal of my Narrative, it will appear very apparent, that I have been but little accustomed to literary composition and arrangement. Nor has this publication been brought forward to profit by the sale; I find myself impelled by a consideration far more satisfactory to my own feelings—that of discharging a debt of gratitude.

P R E F A C E.

TO recount the many civilities I received during my travels in Ireland, from the peasantry; besides the hospitality and flattering testimonies of regard from the generality of the gentry*, would be as uninteresting and tedious, as the recital would be useless. My business in Ireland required me to attend one or other of the circuits for several years, and travelling alone, on horseback, often subjected me to manifold inconveniences; but the want of an inn, or a house of entertainment, has as often been supplied by the obliging assiduities of the peasantry who lived on the road side: and even in the most dreary

* With a few exceptions. See Appendix, p. 47.

mountainous parts of Ireland I have travelled day and night, without ever meeting the smallest molestation, or indeed a fear of any.

Besides, I took with me a large female family, which I settled in parts of the country* inhabited principally by Roman Catholics; I had no servants but of that persuasion, from whose faithfulness, and the obliging manners of our neighbours, my family always found themselves perfectly secure, and enjoyed the most uninterrupted tranquillity. Therefore, having experienced the greatest kindness from the generality of the Irish nation, so far as related to our domestic happiness, during a long residence amongst them, I am proud to acknowledge that I esteem the Irish, *in their own country*. I have bestowed much thought upon the hardships the poor of that country in reality do suffer; far greater hardships appear to be entailed—illegally entailed upon them, I think, than on the people of England, from the same law, or custom of *Tythes* and *Surplice Fees*.

I have been an eye-witness to their sufferings; I relate nothing for fact upon *hearsay* testimony.

In the year 1782, I published the principal heads of the following Narrative, as is therein more particularly noticed; since which period I have occasionally perused it, with a view at some future time to publish it in England; when the publication of such a narrative of facts could most benefit the poor peasantry of Ireland, by such additional publicity.

After waiting near twenty years with this determination, I think this the most appropriate period to try whether any utility can arise from it to the English government, or to the people of Ireland.

* First near Mullingar, afterwards near Donegal.

All the circumstances considered, the war in Ireland has been a war, not against the *tenets*, but against the *pecuniary claims*, of the *reformed* church. Should the following facts and observations bear me out in this opinion, the remedy is easy: Philosophy has already done something for Ireland; but Philosophy has shed more of its genial influence in other of his majesty's *conquered* dominions. Those who gave the finishing hand in forming the law for *Canada* are still in power; and I hope the discontents of Ireland may terminate, by a display of the same philosophic spirit, and as harmoniously, as has the conquest of Canada. The Romish religion having been left in an uninterrupted state in Canada, met with an outcry against the king and ministry, equal to any opposition I ever remember, by the sticklers for the *Protestant interest*, the king was treated with the greatest disrespect, by being hooted in his way to parliament to sign the act. The success of that measure, however, will, I trust, induce the king and ministry to adopt some equally prompt and philosophic measure for the future government of Ireland. King William the Third was a hero, 'tis true; and that there are few heroes who are not guilty of folly is as certain.

William, when he had conquered Ireland, left the people, not as our George did the Canadians, happy in possession of *all* their rights, civil and religious; their ancient places of worship, &c. but he exposed the Irish to wrong and robbery of the vilest description; left them to be governed, not by *English* law, nor by *Irish* law, but by customs promulgated by bigots and barbarians, his mercenary followers, (who divided among them near 2,000,000 of acres belonging to the natives). By laws to extirpate, but none to conciliate; some of which customs, as well as principles, remain in full practice to this day.

b

" Though

" Though struck with horror in th' historic page
 You trace the fury of a bigot's rage ;
 Th' ALMIGHTY'S name profan'd—t' erect the stake
 And bis own image BUTCHER'D—for bis sake."

Modern heroes and ministers do things on a footing more agreeable to the *philosophic* age we live in. Much are the *Canadians* indebted to the philosophy of George III ; far more than are the *Irish*, or even the English, to the courage and coercion of William III.

My application in behalf of the Irish peasantry never went farther than to relieve them from some restraints which must hurt the feelings of any man, or body of men, and which cramps their industry also. The proposition I present, and another in the Appendix, are so moderate, it must be immediately seen that nothing is required therein incompatible with due subordination to superiors, and what may be the means of securing to his majesty and his government the most unfeigned loyalty and attachment in the people of Ireland.

Mr. *Arthur Young* has for many years been publishing the most marked invective against ecclesiastical dues, without ever giving any one rational plan that was possible to be carried into execution ; but, for want of a better, and to get rid of *Tythes*, he draws a conclusion that, *he thinks*, the Clergy ought to be revolutionized, *à la Française*.

I have taken a leaf from Mr. *Young's* " Tour in Ireland," and another from his " Annals of Agriculture," briefly to shew wherein our sentiments agree, and where they do not ; to use a phrase belonging to the *craft*, if I am not mistaken, A. Y. has, himself, a few *weeds* to pluck from amongst his *barley*.

The Earl of Suffolk, is the first who has mentioned, in the English parliament, the true cause of the late rebellion in Ireland. The matter, therefore, of his lordships observations, so far as relates to *Tythes*,
 tending

tending very much to corroborate the opinions hereafter related, I thought it extremely appropriate to prefix thereto ; and as his Grace of Bedford spoke on the same subject, not however as applying to Ireland but to England ; and being answered by the Lord Chancellor, I have also given those speeches ; the whole coming so very opportunely, as I was closing this little work at the press.

The novelty of these speeches cannot be great, because the substance of them has appeared in the Newspapers ; all that I can vouch for is, their authenticity, and somewhat more correctness ; having been favoured with a revised copy from Mr. Woodfall, to whom I owe particular obligation.

What was said respecting Tythes in the debate in the House of Lords, Jan. 8, 1799, on the *Income Bill*.

The *Earl of Suffolk*, after complaining of the great additional burden that the *Income Bill* would throw upon the landholders, and enumerating the present drawbacks on their income, such as the heavy duties on salt, the poor's rate, &c. &c. he stated, that the fatal effects of oppressing those who hold lands in Ireland ought to serve as a caution to the legislature, and prevent their falling into the same fatal error. Tythes were, in this country, extremely heavy for the landholder to bear, but in Ireland they operated with such intolerable pressure, that he verily believed the late insurrection in that kingdom, and the misery and sufferings of the people which produced it, were, in a great measure, to be ascribed to the weight of Tythes which that unfortunate country was obliged to sustain. Their Lordships would recollect, that in Ireland a large majority of the people were Roman Catholics, all of that description, therefore, were under the necessity of paying Tythes twice—first to the clergymen of the church of England ; and in the second instance, to their own Roman Catholic Priest.

The

The *Duke of Bedford* said, Tythes also were another and very considerable drawback on income, which every man possessed of landed estates felt and complained of. About the abolition of Tythes, he did not think there were two opinions. In so saying, he did not wish to be understood as entertaining any idea of following the example of France, by depriving the clergy of their Tythes, without any compensation. He meant to give them the value in some other way, and when a fit substitute could be hit upon, he believed he might say, that it was the general wish to abolish the Tythes of the clergy. [It was whispered (by Lord Auckland and Lord Grenville) that the *laity* held the Tythes in many parishes of the different counties of the kingdom.] The Duke said, certainly, and the same argument will apply to the laity who hold Tythes as to the clergy. This Bill, however, went to introduce a general tything system, throughout the kingdom.

The *Lord Chancellor* said, he had only one more point, to which the noble Duke had alluded, to touch upon, but that was too important to be suffered to pass without particular notice. Speaking of Tythes, "about the abolition of which the noble Duke had said, he did not think there were two opinions," against that assertion he begged leave to enter his protest. The noble Duke, indeed, had said, that he did not go the length of wishing to deprive the clergy of their Tythes, as had been done in France, without giving them a compensation adequate to the amount of their value, and he had added, "that if a fit substitute could be found to be given to the clergy in *lieu of Tythes*, the general wish of men of all descriptions would concur in their abolition." This he begged leave utterly to deny, there was, perhaps, no one question on which such a variety of opinions prevailed; nor was it the clergy alone who held Tythes, though a clergyman was always studiously and invidiously, mentioned when Tythes were touched upon. Many of the laity, it was matter of notoriety, held Tythes, and he would tell the noble Duke, that they held them by as good a tenure as either his
grace

grace or any other freeholder held his estate. With respect to the Tythes in the hands of the clergy, there were, he believed, but few sensible farmers in the kingdom, who did not know, that they were better off, that those Tythes should remain as they stood, because every farmer must know, that in a struggle upon that subject he had a better hold on the parson, than he could have on his landlord or any other lay impropiator.

With the utmost deference to the opinion and sentiments of the *noble and learned president*, I shall beg leave to remark upon the general tendency of his argument and doctrine, that the proprietors of Tythes held them by as good a tenure as his Grace of Bedford or any freeholder holds his estate, is, I think, rather a weak comparison; and I shall have spent my money and time to a very bad purpose, indeed, if I have not in the following pages, completely refuted his lordship altogether; as well with regard to the *tenure* and *reputation* of that species of property, as the *antiquity*, and *variation* of *income* arising therefrom. Of the first, sufficient is said in page 39. Besides, the *uncertainty* or *casual* value of Tythes, strips at once the Lord Chancellor's comparison entirely of all its force. Is there any species of property so liable to abuse in assessing it, and of evasion in payment? Is there any thing like these difficulties attached to a freehold estate?

As a further answer to the Lord Chancellor's comparison, take the case of Mr. Miller *, of Dunstall Hall, in Staffordshire, where it is endeavoured to shew the comparative profits between a grass and corn farm, and in which it is stated, against tillage, amongst other expences, that, in a farm consisting of one hundred and thirty acres, under a course of crops, the Tythes amounted, for thirty acres of oats, at

* Annals of Agriculture, vol. XIV. p. 8, 9.

eight shillings per acre, to twelve pounds ; forty acres of wheat at fourteen shillings, to twenty-eight pounds ; forty acres of barley at nine shillings, to eighteen pounds ; total for Tythes fifty-eight pounds.

In consequence of the great drawback for Tythes he acquired but twelve and a half per cent. profit for his risk, and advance of money ; and therefore it was in contemplation to convert his land into a grass farm, which might be occupied as the Irish graziers do, with stock not tytheable. Or, see the case of the parish of Wrangham in Middlesex, belonging, as I am informed, to Lord Lonsdale, who laid the whole parish waste that he might starve the parson. So much for the Lord Chancellor's comparison between Tythes and a Freehold estate : from which may be gathered how necessary it is that a regulation should be made in the temporalities belonging to our religious establishment in both kingdoms.

W. B.

*Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street,
January, 1799.*

A
FAITHFUL NARRATIVE
OF THE
SUFFERINGS
OF THE
IRISH PEASANTRY.

THE State Prisoners in Ireland, who have been examined before the Committees of Lords and Commons, have uniformly given it as their opinion, that the Roman Catholics were quite indifferent about Emancipation and a Parliamentary Reform, any farther than what concerned the abolition of TYTHES *. Greatly have we to lament, therefore, that this ecclesiastical bone of contention was not removed many years ago, and thereby have saved the vast profusion of blood and property which has taken place in that unhappy country within the last twelve months.

* On the examination of certain United Irishmen before the Secret Committee of the Lords, the following questions were asked :

Doctor James McNevin, sworn.

Q. " Do you think the mass of the people care the value of this pen, or the drop of ink which it contains, for Parliamentary Reform, or Catholic Emancipation ?

A. " I am sure they do not ; but they wish much to be relieved from the burthen of Tythes."

Thomas Addis Emmett, Esq. sworn.

Q. " Did you think the mass of the people cared for Catholic Emancipation, or Parliamentary Reform ?

A. " I believe the mass of the people did not care a feather for either, till it was explained to them as leading to the Abolition of Tythes."

B

What

What has happened, however, was publicly foretold, and even wished might happen, at least so far as *innuendo* would carry, by Mr. Young, about twenty years ago *. From Mr. Young's treatises
on

* Few there are, I believe, who read Mr. Young's *Essays on Agriculture*, who will not derive a certain degree of pleasure and instruction therefrom; but whoever attentively peruses them will discover that his writings have a pernicious tendency. I shall prove this in more than one instance. See the subsequent Letter to him.

I think it not possible to mistake Mr. Young's principles and meaning. "Our sister kingdom," says he, "labours under this heavy burden (Tythes) as well as her neighbours, to which is very much owing the uncultivated state of so great a part of her territory."

"Tythes in Ireland are not unreasonably rated; but that there are abuses in the modes of levying *them* is undoubted: the greatest that I heard of were the notes and bonds taken in some parts of that kingdom by the proctors for the payment of Tythes, which bear interest, and which are sometimes continued for several years, principal and interest being consolidated until the sum becomes too great for the poor man to pay, when great extortions are complained of, and formed the grievance which seemed most to raise the resentment of the rioters, called Whiteboys. The great power of the Protestant gentlemen render their compositions very light, while the poor Catholic is made, in too many cases, to pay severely for the deficiencies of his betters. This is a great abuse, but not to be remedied till the whole kingdom is animated with a different spirit." *Tour in Ireland, 1779; Part II. p. 79, 81.*

"The House of Commons, some years ago, passed a vote, declaring every lawyer an enemy to his country, who, in any way whatever, was concerned in any case of Tythe for fat bullocks and cows; and without its becoming a law was so completely obeyed, that it has regulated the business ever since; it was certainly a reproach to that parliament, that potatoes and turf were not the objects; for if any thing called for so violent an exemption, it was certainly the potatoe garden and fuel of the poor cottar.

"No object in both the kingdoms can well be of greater importance than a fixed composition for Tythe. The tenths is a mode of payment so disagreeable in every respect to the clergy, and so ruinous to the laity, that a general public improvement would follow such a measure." *Ibid.*

If, however, there should be thought the least ambiguity in the above *animating* language, what follows, the production of Arthur Young, unravels his designs, and discovers, moreover, that he is afflicted with a certain portion of that most dreadful of all maladies, the *French disease*. If A. Y. is no *saint*, he is a true *prophet*; for, if powder and ball, fire and sword, are *bot* enough, A. Y. and some of his correspondents, from what has happened in Ireland, will feel themselves completely gratified.

"If such enormous Tythes, as are taken by the clergy, have no effect on the *nerves* of the good people of England, nothing will. Some of my correspondents have wished to be put, *in this respect*, on the footing of our neighbours, the French; and, in truth, well they may. If something

on Agriculture and Tythes much reformation concerning ecclesiastical dues, I know, was expected; but the greatest clamour and expectation ever raised against Tenths, was in the year 1788, when Mr. Grattan espoused the cause in behalf of the poor *. But he did not succeed; and

something is not done to ease this *pinching point*, a contest will be raised, by and by, in this kingdom, not enough to have dreadful effects. It is the period in England to GRANT *nothing*; the consequence of which may be, *all will be taken*." A. Y. Annals of Agriculture, vol. XIV. p. 9. 1790.

A. Y. has been suspected to possess the *French disorder* of *Deism*. In most of his writings he appears at enmity with the pastors of the Christian church; inasmuch, that although he never thinks it too much to cram his bullocks, sheep, and hogs, and, I suppose, even dogs; yet the clergy may starve; or, like the clergy of France, he would have them all *transported*.

This *English*, though now *Gallicised*, Farmer pockets one-sixth part of the whole national yearly grant to the Board of Agriculture. I question much of all the beasts he ever reared, or fed, whether any one, or all together, ever afforded him so much *fat* as the *Treasury Bull*.

After evincing to the world A. Y.'s amazing great appetite, and considering that he has been *feeding* ministerially, four or five years, under a plentiful board, we may suppose him *fat* enough to stand a little *roasting*, on the score of a violent breach of hospitality, and his uncharitableness in his last attack upon the Clergy.

A facetious, excentric *bon-vivant*, well known to A. Y. related to the writer the following anecdote:

A. Y. whilst agent to Lord Kingsborough, clandestinely, it is said, broke up, in one of his *experiments*, a piece of *Maiden lee*. The favourite spot A. Y. *ploughed* and *sowed*, but, as the *seed* began to shew itself, it was then too late discovered by the family, that this *experimental* farmer had been labouring to produce, instead of a vegetable, an *animal plantation*; A. Y., therefore, found it *convenient*, before the crop was ripe, to prevent certain worse consequences, to take French leave of Mitchelstown, and has not set his foot in Ireland ever since.

This anecdote was received from a *Mr. James Green*, well known amongst the *bon-vivants* in both kingdoms; and, at this time, it is believed, in the family of the present Secretary of War, to whom, for other particulars, the reader is referred.

This anecdote shews that A. Y. pryed into a gentleman's farm to count his thistle, &c. but that he exercised as well the trade of a book-maker, as that of a *mole-catcher*; that he sometimes officiated with as great a desire to see what sort of women a man had in his family, as to study grasses, corn, and cattle, or to shew gentlemen the best mode of raising the rents of farms; which has brought destruction on thousands of poor families in both kingdoms. See the subsequent Letter to him.

* See his arguments in the Appendix.

the

the doctrine of Tythes being brought forward, and strongly supported by the adverse party in the House of Commons, who prevailed at that time, left the oppressed farmer without the least hope of ever obtaining redress by peaceable application. From this period there seems but little doubt that the seeds of discontent, which have at length grown up into insurrection, were sown in that country, at least, so far as the Roman *Catholics* were concerned in it.

In the year 1782 the writer was in company with the Reverend Dr. Barnard, at that time bishop of Killaloe, and Sir Lucius O'Brien, at the house of Mr. Fitzgerald, then member for the county of Clare. The conversation turned principally on the subject of Tythes, Population, and Agriculture. I mentioned, that, during a very long residence in Ireland, my observations had been directed principally to such matters as bore a contrast to the manners and customs of England, my native country; and that I thought the operation of the Tythe Laws a much greater oppression upon our Irish fellow subjects than they were upon those of Great Britain. I mentioned a few particulars in the management of the *Church of England* Ministers in Ireland relative to their Tythes; all which the Bishop acknowledged, if the circumstances were true, would be a good cause for enquiry; but he had some doubts concerning the grievances being general; and, in short, turned a deaf ear to every thing proposed by Sir Lucius O'Brien and myself, that had for its object the smallest alteration in the mode of collecting ecclesiastical dues.

Being in Dublin during the autumn of the same year, I took the liberty of addressing to his Lordship, in print, a Plan for the Modification of Tythes, accompanied with a few facts upon which I founded my arguments, to prove the *necessity* of an alteration. I had the happiness to find that my essays on that subject gained the general approbation of the Public; and, a few years after my return home from Ireland, I had the additional satisfaction to hear that the parishioners of St. Catharines in the city of Dublin had adopted *one part of my plan*.

They

They settled *sixty pounds* a year upon the Roman Catholic priest of that parish from its *own* revenues. This politic measure has not extended any farther than I have heard of, for a reason hereafter mentioned.

Other causes have since arisen, which have, no doubt, occasioned resistance; one is, the Roman Catholics joining the Presbyterians (to promote, what the latter termed, the common cause), although, *naturally*, they entertained the most cordial hatred for each other.

It is not from what has lately come out in the foregoing examination, that has strengthened my opinion, but the testimony is so far important as it corroborates what myself and others have said and published relative to Tythes; and shews what use has been made by the *art* of the Presbyterians to bring over the poor Roman Catholics to aid them in the Rebellion; and, affording them, at the time of trial, but a feeble support.

Mr. Young has bore testimony to the *loyalty* of these poor creatures; I must, in justice, do the same. Wherever I travelled or resided during a stay of *fourteen* years amongst them, I seldom heard a disloyal expression, unless the anathemas against the Proctors and Tythe Farmers may be called acts of disloyalty. But who can wonder at the terrible delusion the Roman Catholics have suffered, when we consider that the wary French Directory have been deluded by the Presbyterians also. It was the effect of folly and madness to suppose that Ireland could exist *independent* of Great Britain; such an idea, however, appears, to be insisted on by the united testimony of the state prisoners. The Irish may have had one motive for promoting the invasion, the French Directory another; they might imagine, perhaps, that the easiest passage into Britain, was by a retrograde voyage to and from Ireland.

It is much to be lamented, says Mr. Young, that emigration was ever stopped by authority. In emigration the discontented had a remedy, although a desperate one. By this check their desperation

has broken out in another way ; just, perhaps, as the *Irish* Castle partizans wished it might have done.

The writer will not so far depart from the subject of his narrative as to enter into the intricacies of state intrigue, to discover the real cause of *all* the discontents amongst the people of Ireland : they originated, I believe, in the first formation of the volunteers ; and, when the people began to feel their strength they were *dismissed* in a very unhandsome way. Secondly, the *Irish* party belonging to the administration in Ireland, for near twenty years past, except during the short viceroyship of the Duke of Portland, have been counteracting the English in all their views in governing that kingdom. Nothing is more apparent to the writer, than that the *English interest* has declined, in proportion as Irishmen have been promoted to fill those offices of high station, which our forefathers always thought it good policy to fill with men of integrity from this country. That the Irish, who have profited by these novel appointments, were themselves at the head of a party of incendiaries, at the period above hinted, who were continually crying down, in *opposition* news papers (the proprietors of which were *in the pay of Castle agents*,) “ *the cursed English interest*” as they were pleased to term it, for the purpose of grasping all, or the most substantial part of the power of government ; which they have effected ; thereby leaving the English viceroy, as he really is, or, at least, such they would have him to be, a mere cypher in the state. A farther account of these Irish *Janus*’s at present need not be given ; but, if any other particulars were thought necessary, the writer is not a man that will draw back from enquiry, and having been himself a little in the secret, would disclose all he knows relative to these fell transactions *. He is pretty far advanced

* I was in Dublin when the Irish obtained a return of the *appellant* jurisdiction, 1784 ; and, I call God to witness, that the language of the lawyers, and of all well informed people was, that nothing was wanting to ruin Ireland but an *Irish* — — —. It is no uncommon thing to

vanced in years, and, when he dies, probably, most of the leading facts of this *Irish intrigue* will die with him ; so that in future, if leisure permits, he may lay the circumstances before the Public ; if they answer no better, or immediate purpose, they may illustrate a page of Irish history.

If Englishmen think they are any way interested in what relates to Ireland, (I confess I entertain some doubt upon the subject,) it may afford them satisfaction to know, in their fullest extent, the grievances the Irish really do suffer. Perhaps some may be led to commiserate the hardness of their fate, and, in some degree, my statement may prove a *palliative* for the part they have acted in the tragical scene lately exhibited in that distracted country.

All I propose, in this publication, is to compress as much as possible, my Essays addressed to the Bishop of Killaloe in the year 1782 ; and, to give heads of the Debate in the Irish House of Commons, on Tythes, in 1788. This task I shall perform the more readily, being firmly of opinion, that Ireland *never* will arrive to a perfect state of tranquillity, unless a general modification of the Tythe Laws take place ; and, farther, I am pretty certain, from my knowledge of the people of Ireland, their interests, and feelings, that if the Royal Amnesty, lately issued, had been accompanied with something like a Royal Assurance of a Revision of the Tythe Laws, not a doubt dwells

to see *Irish* lawyers, when preferred to the seats of justice in that kingdom, unblushingly hearing and determining causes in which themselves have been employed as council, sometimes from their early youth. To the honour of the English bar, within my memory, such unchaste transactions have never transpired : well, and truly, might a late good Bishop of Cloyne say, in the House of Lords of Ireland on the hearing of an appeal, " I expect, now, that the appellant jurisdiction is brought back from England to see causes determined by *affinity*," so thought the money lenders in England ; for they immediately called home all they had lent on Irish estates. The hearing appeals in the *Irish* House of Lords sometimes creates diversion ; I remember myself a humorous circumstance, where, in the case of *Gay*, of *Gaybrooke*, the archbishop of Cashel divided the whole house against the *unanimous* opinion of the twelve Irish Judges !

upon my mind, that Rebellion in that country would immediately have ceased altogether.

Mr. Young truly observes, that the Proctors and Tythe Farmers are very *civil* to *gentlemen*, but their *cruelties* to the *poor* are intolerable *.

The bulk of the inhabitants of Ireland are the Roman Catholics. The generality of them are farmers; I do not mean that they hold land to *feed stock*, but that they are the principal people throughout the kingdom who are employed in *husbandry*, consequently on these the Tythe Laws fall most weighty. Add to this, that, as they are (generally speaking) the hardest working people, so are they the poorest in the whole community †.

Next to the Roman Catholics the Protestant Dissenters are the most numerous, and are known to be great sticklers against the clergy of the established church, principally, however, on account of the Tythes. Their number in Ireland is computed to be as eight to five of those who go to the Church of England, if we include Presbyterians, Quakers, Seceders, and other sectaries who never go to church, or in *any way* employ the parson. The Dissenters, like the Catholics, must provide for their own clergy ‡, and pay *tenths* and *small dues* to the Establishment; a hardship which they do not endure with so much Christian patience as the *English* Church teaches.

Relative to these two classes, the Roman Catholics and the Dissenters, considering their great superiority in point of numbers in the community, (I have heard them estimated together, as being not less on an average, than *fifteen to five* of the church people,) the Tythe Laws may be considered severer, even in this particular, than they are in England; where the proportion of Protestants to Roman Catholics and Dissenters is believed to be nearly the same.

* Tour, County of Longford.

† See the case of one Constance, Lord Clare's tenant, at the close of this Essay, and the Appendix.

‡ Except ten pounds per ann. from the *First fruits*, to Protestant dissenting ministers in actual appointment.

The Roman Catholics and the Dissenters in Ireland, but particularly the former, have waged almost continual war with the Established Clergy, the Proctors, and the Tythe Farmers. Nothing has yet been able to quell the rage of these people against the manner of paying Tythes; nor could they be collected oftentimes but with the assistance of a *military force*, and by the terrors of the *ecclesiastical courts*; or, in other words, not improperly styled, the *Irish inquisition*; which, in most other countries, is now known only by name, but here it is realized in that of BISHOP'S COURTS. (See Appendix.)

The trading and commercial part of the Irish nation have received some extension of *their* trade; but, whilst the mode of paying Tythe continues, the poor landholder feels no alleviation of *his* burthens. If by the sweat of his brow he has made an improvement in husbandry, recovered a piece of land from a bog, or waste, his industry is a fresh cause of taxation, to augment the value of the living of a *foreign* clergy.

The Tythe Laws are both a clog to industry and to agriculture; they counteract, in some degree, the encouragement that is given to promote improvements in husbandry. By the present mode of taking Tythes the richest Protestants *pay the least* towards the support of their own religious establishment; for, in order that they may contribute as little as possible to the maintenance of their own clergy, and the augmentation of livings, they prefer occupying vast tracts of land with stock *not tytheable*; leaving the laborious *tillagers* of all denominations to *groan* under the *ponderous weight* of the *English Church*.

With such a host of foes as are the landholders of Ireland, intermixed with communions of opposite persuasions to that of the *established Church*, whose members, as I before observed, make a very small proportion of the aggregate body in the kingdom, it is no wonder to see and hear of many of the established clergy being involved in continual disputes with their parishioners about their

dues. The partiality of the Tythe Laws makes these dues very difficult to be collected by the Clergy, and sometimes a service of great danger. Every advantage is taken to cheat and vex the parson, even by Churchmen, Dissenters, and Papists. It must be noticed that men of the best families and of the greatest abilities, and most exemplary in the discharge of their duty are least able to collect their Tythes.

The clergy themselves, however, are not altogether to blame; they are the servants of Government, and their income arises from this ancient usage; and, until Government will interfere and settle a commutation in lieu of Tythes, nothing, I am persuaded, can be done. Besides, the greatest part of the Tythes, I am informed, are in lay hands, or belonging to foundations. The clergy would readily accept an annuity, at least for their own lives, for the part belonging to them, which is comparatively of no great value, if, as I said before, it depended upon *their* consent.

After these general remarks on the partiality and oppression of Tythes in Ireland, so far as relates to *Nonconformists*, other particulars, more minute, of their still more unnatural operation follows.

“ Shear *your* * flock, but not to the quick.”

Bp. Cranmer's Advice to the Clergy.

In addition to the Tenth, or what are called the Great Tythes, the Irish clergy have customs, peculiar, I believe, to that country, of demanding certain small dues, which, to an English reader, must appear as curious, as to me they appear oppressive. Besides the Tenth of *Milches*, *Pigs*, and *Poultry*, the *vicar's* favourite objects, as in England, a demand is made for surplice fees, and, which is singular, even in cases where no duty is performed, viz. *Marriage Money*, *Chris-*

* The Roman Catholics are not the flock belonging to the Protestant establishment; none are the parson's flock but such as are his communicants, in the reformed church; and to such I would say with the poet,

“ Who at the altar serve, should by the altar live.”

tening, and *Purification Money*; which are paid to the church by persons of *all* denominations.

First. *Marriage Money*. For the solemnization of a marriage between a Roman Catholic couple, performed by their own parish priest, the parson claims four shillings and six pence ! This is a fixed *modus*, agreed upon between the priest and the parson; a demand which the poor *unbeneficed* priest oftentimes is obliged to pay, although the parties were unable, and perhaps unwilling, to contribute the smallest part towards it. Both priest and parson are oftentimes cheated of their dues; for many a couple who intend to marry, lay hold of a frier, commonly called a "*curse of Currah*," who, for *sixpence* and a glass of whisky, performs the marriage ceremony behind a hedge, and there is no more ceremony about it.

Second. *Christening and Purification Money*. I once saw a warrant, issued by a justice of peace for the county of Westmeath, against a poor Roman Catholic, to recover two shillings and sixpence, due to the parson of the parish of Mullingar, for his wife's Purification. Before a warrant can be obtained, it is necessary to prove the woman to have had a child, that she was *then* in the way of nursing, and that the dues to the established Church had not been paid. To elude a search, women often attempt to conceal, from the prying eye of the Proctor or Tythe Farmer, their infants and the cradle; should, however, a suspicion arise, these gentry, without ceremony, examine their breasts, to discover whether they are in the way of nursing or giving suck. Something like this gave rise to *Wat Tyler's* insurrection. History informs, that the Collectors of the *Poll* tax of that time wanted *Tyler* to pay for a daughter; but he pleading her non-age, the Collector proceeded to examine her, for her *puberty*. Although the enraged man lost his life, with many others, in the insurrection, mankind in general could but approve his opposition, and that of his partizans, to such unnatural and wicked oppression.

The

The present insurrection and rebellion is not the first within our own memory that has been occasioned in Ireland, on account of Tenth's and small dues being rigorously demanded by the established Clergy. About thirty years ago an insurrection broke out by a set of people calling themselves Hearts of Steel. This was occasioned by the following very trifling circumstance: A corpse had been interred in the church yard of a parish in the county of Armagh, without paying the parson's dues. This so irritated Dr. Kirney, the resident minister of the parish, that he ordered the dead body to be taken up; and it lay above ground until it putrefied, and became very offensive, insomuch that it occasioned the people to rise in a mass; they re-interred the corpse, drove the doctor from the parish, and, as history tells, they perpetrated much mischief in the north of Ireland, and that several of them were executed, before they were quelled*. This was the only *Presbyterian* insurrection I find recorded in Irish history.

Family Money. This is a complete Poll Tax, payable to the established Clergy; lodgers, and what are called, in Ireland, room-keepers,

* Many of the Hearts of Steel were brought to Dublin for trial, which trials first brought forth the abilities and rendered popular, the late Chief Baron Burgh; whether, from the mercenary unchristian behaviour of Dr. Kirney which gave rise to the insurrection, or from the people being brought out of their own county to be tried by strangers; perhaps, something of both circumstances; together with Mr. Hussy Burgh's oratory exerted in their favour, they were, to the astonishment of most people, every man acquitted by a county of Dublin jury. I enquired after Dr. Kirney, who was (in 1782) alive, and then resided in Dublin; he had not, as I was informed, ventured once, since the insurrection, to visit his parish.

The Tythe Laws, within the last twenty years, have been far more hateful and oppressive than formerly. From a determination by the Chief Baron, now Lord Yelverton, the Clergy have in the South of Ireland, taking Tythes of Potatoes, the principal, nay the staple article that feeds the people; and of turf, composing food, and firing, the *only* comforts the poor of Ireland can be said to possess; after *turf*, it remains to be seen whether the *fish of the sea* are not Tytheable. Well might the poet ejaculate, as if he had been intimately acquainted with the extortions of the *Irish* Tythe Farmer:

"Through all the scenes of cruelty, they run;
The Parson's rod has every plague in ONE."

of

of every religion, pay ten pence each for Head Money. I knew a Roman Catholic tailor, being a room-keeper (an inmate) imprisoned six weeks in the goal of Inniskillin for six pence Family Money.

I rented a lodging in that town with five in family, and one morning I was awakened, and told two gentlemen wanted me; when I came out of my bed chamber I found in the parlour two ruffian looking fellows, each armed with a brace of pistols and a cutlas: the first words they uttered were "Half a crown, Sir, *Family Money*, due to Dr. Smith." It did not avail to say I was a lodger; that I knew of no taxes I had a right to pay; that I begged time to be informed, &c. &c. but pay the money I must, or an article of furniture would taken away by *force of arms*. They said, if I thought myself aggrieved, I might apply to the provost; I therefore paid the money, and did apply to the provost, who said it was the custom; and told me, he had committed the Roman Catholic tailor, as before mentioned, and should have been *obliged*, by the custom and operation of the Tythe Laws, to have committed me also, if Dr. Smith's proctors had not found an article that would answer the Doctor's demand. The first, and only time I was ever put in *fear of my life* and *robbed* of half a crown, was by Dr. Smith's myrmidons; I say robbed, for such extortion and injustice is not supportable by the common law of England; nor by any existing statute of the Irish parliament; and, in all cases where the legislature of Ireland has not prescribed the limits of tythes and small dues, and in every other case, all determinations, if brought to trial, must, according to the constitution of Ireland, be determined upon the principle of the common law of England.

[The living of Inniskillin nets to Dr. Smith between eight and nine hundred pounds a year. He was a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, and it may not be improper here to notice, that a Fellow of the College will never accept of a living of less value: the reason is, that a fellowship is worth, at the lowest calculation, five hundred pounds per

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annum,

annum, many of them are still more profitable ; the Fellows will not leave a certainty, easily acquired, to undergo the fatigues and vexation oftentimes attending the collection of tenths and small dues, unless they are very well paid for it.]

The same parish, which yields a princely revenue to the church, contains some hundreds of nonconforming inhabitants, perhaps a thousand, most probably of the Romish persuasion. The charge of these to the priests is quite a slavery, for which *he* receives his dues on a Lord's day in *farthings*, *halfpence*, and *pence*, dropped into a box set on a stool at the chapel door, or at the gate of a field if he has no chapel *.

In very large and fertile parishes I have known, that the year round there have not sometimes been twenty, but seldom to exceed fifty Protestant communicants.

Mr. Young (Irish Tour, vol. II. Part II.) has the following observation on Irish "churches where there are no congregations;" and then in a note he says, "The assertion is not founded, on the following charge, in the national accounts, 1779, though one might presume something upon it :

" To the board of first fruits for building new churches, and rebuilding old churches, <i>in such parishes as no divine public service has been performed for twenty years past,</i>	l.
- - -	6000"

The Editor of this Essay desires to add, for the information of all true Christians, the following account of expen- diture, from the <i>first fruits</i> , towards repairing and building Roman Catholic chapels, viz. from the conquest of Ire-	l.	s.	d.
land, by William III. to the present time, - - -	0	0	0

* The Roman Catholic chapels, only a few years ago, adopted *music* in their service. A wag of the College, who well knew the extreme poverty of the priests in general, wrote the following lines upon one of the doors of Denmark Street chapel, which was the first that had music :

" Where the music is the people is.
Where the people is the *farthing* is.
Where the *farthing* is the priest is."

The

The Editor cannot help thinking, that the Government has been very remiss, in this respect, towards the Roman Catholics of Ireland; and is of opinion, that if his Majesty's ministers had assisted them in keeping up their chapels and supporting their clergy, they would have been ever devoted to the service of his family and Government; even Mr. Young acknowledges they are "a grateful and a loyal people." Many thousands of these persons in various parts assemble every Sabbath day at the foot of hills, with only a hovel for the ALTAR, very much in the form of a cow-stall, where they hear Mass in the open air, and in all kinds of weather; as they have been deprived the use of their own churches, which they were compelled to resign to the clergy of the *English* establishment, it behoves Government to erect for them, and superintend, their places of religious worship.

In the parish where I resided, *Killimard*, near the town of Donegall, there were *about forty Protestant communicants*. The Romans always attended the vestries held at the church, and voted wine for *our* sacrament, and money for repairs of the church, to be raised upon themselves and the parish at large, without one dissentient; the Presbyterians were not quite so obedient. What reflections, to minds that can reflect, must agitate the soul of a Christian, just come from his devotion in a comfortable warm pew in the church, and immediately on leaving it, to have in his view, some hundreds of his fellow parishioners bare headed and on their knees, in all weathers, praying to and praising their God in the *open air*! With the utmost shame and confusion have I often beheld this; and the only relief I could receive was, as often to ride away as fast as possible, from hearing and seeing a spectacle so mortifying to the feelings of human nature. Much as I dislike the general character of the Earl of Bristol, Bishop of Derry, yet I must in justice to the liberality of his lordship, who has, I am well informed, built several chapels for the Catholics in his diocese, at his own expence*: other bishops may

* His lordship also gave two hundred pounds to repair meeting houses for the Dissenters.

have

have done the same, but I never heard of any ; yet, I doubt not, but some of their lordships may have contributed, *with others*, to the same purpose.

The nobility, gentry, and trades-people of Ireland, are not satisfied with keeping in their families any servants, or labourers, of the Romish persuasion (and there are few to be had that are not) unless they constantly attend the Mass ; for, those who are not regular in this duty, are very irregular in other matters ; in short, are not to be trusted ; since, therefore, the generality of people acknowledge, by this, the *necessity* of the Mass, for their own protection and happiness, arising from faithful dependents, the inattention of the Protestants to the livelihood of the priests, and the neglect to build them chapels, is, perhaps, the very worst œconomy, and has always appeared to me a matter of astonishment. The English made a conquest of Canada ; you have there an English administration and a Popish religious establishment. I hear of no religious cabals ever happening between the government and people ; on the contrary, all his happiness and tranquillity ; Quebec* is secure. The English conquered Ireland, also a Popish country ; you govern the country with an English-Irish administration, overturn the old religion, introduce the *reformed* as the *true* church, and make it penal to worship God in any other way ! the consequence has been bickering and heart-burnings in Ireland, on account of religion ever since. What sort of government, the king's new subjects, the Hottentots, are to have, remains to be seen ; this, I

* In the act for settling the government of Quebec, or, as it is now called, *Upper and Lower Canada*, the Romish priests are allowed to receive Tythes for lands, &c. held by those of the Romish persuasion ; and restricted only from receiving Tythes from lands, &c. held by Protestants. 31 Geo. III. cap. 31. p. 1287. The council and legislature are composed of Romans and Protestants. It is almost irreconcilable with common sense, to suppose one king governs the two countries, *Ireland and Canada* : in the one the king is advised to treat the Romans with the tenderness of a kind father, which has hitherto secured to his majesty a true allegiance from Canada ; in the other, the utmost pillage and extortion has for a century been exercised against the Romans, which has, during the above period, been the cause of shedding too much blood in our sister kingdom of Ireland.

believe,

believe, that if the Hottentots are used no better than the poor Irish have been for several generations, it will not be very easy for us long to retain the Cape of Good Hope. The tiger may be tamed, only feed him well. Vide Grattan's Speech in the Appendix. Certain I am, were the Irish better treated, better neighbours, and, as I said before, more loyal subjects are not to be found, I firmly believe, in any country.

The church livings in Ireland are worth from one hundred to fourteen hundred pounds per annum. By any thing I have proposed, should my plan be adopted, their value will not be one shilling less. The amount is not so much complained of as the manner of assessing and collecting the *quantum*. And yet, concerning the astonishing amount of the revenues attached to the church in Ireland, I beg leave to make a remark on the very great inequality in the distribution of those revenues. It will be asked by those uninformed, how are the Roman Catholic priests supported? The church revenues are paid fifteen shillings in twenty by Nonconformists. Do the priests receive any part of this revenue? Not a shilling!

I know it has been said that the priests are men of indifferent character, and, a worse quality attached to them, no doubt; they are said to be enemies to Government †.

Many of the priests may be very undeserving. The want of a liberal education; the grovelling and precarious manner of procuring wherewith to buy food and raiment, evince it. Some there may be devoid of proper converse, living in the wild parts of the kingdom. These causes properly considered, the undeserving part of them not being more numerous is no small astonishment, especially when an act of parliament holds out forty pounds per annum (an intolerable burden on the

† Quære. Would the Church of England ministers support the Government a whit better, if they were not paid for it? I think many of them would not; but into this field for discussion I shall not enter.

public) as a bribe for their apostacy. Very few priests recant, and enter into the Established Church, but such as are excommunicated by the Romish church for bad behaviour. On the other hand, I have known men of learning amongst the priests, of the most gentle and sociable manners, and of the purest morals, subsisting, as I before said, upon the most precarious benevolence, received in *farthings* or *half-pence* at the chapel doors, from their congregations.

In the year 1793 the Government of Ireland conferred on the Roman Catholics a sort of emancipation, by repealing certain statutes then considered as *obsolete*, and, consequently, not dreaded, but, like many of our penal statutes, hung over their heads. Nothing, however, was done for them in alleviation of the grievances they suffered from the Proctors and Tythe Farmers; nor was any allowance given to the priests. Indeed, the circumstance quoted in the early part of this Essay, of a salary in one solitary instance, was mentioned by Dr. Duignan * in the House of Commons, as a very great offence. The Doctor related, that, by "an act of vestry, the parish of St. Catharines in the city of Dublin had agreed to give sixty pounds per annum to a person whom they called a Roman Catholic curate." *Morning Chronicle*, March 14, 1793. Had this example, instead of meet-

* Nicknamed the *up and down* Doctor, from the following circumstance: Before Mr. Grattan brought forward his motion against Tythes, the college *tythe-mongers* applied to him to sit for his picture; after they got it, and he had exerted himself in parliament in the Tythe business, the *luminous, liberal, and enlightened Fellows* of *Trinity College*, would not permit the picture to be put up. When Lord Fitzwilliam went over, then *up went Grattan*; Lord Fitzwilliam being recalled, *down again came Grattan*!—When the picture was up, it was neither a credit to Mr. Grattan nor to the College—a mere daub—a *twenty pounds* portrait; and, although a miserable thing of its kind, there were more *boards* called, more controversy about putting up and taking down poor Grattan's picture, than on many questions of Mathematics or Natural Philosophy that ever were argued in the University. Dr. Brown has written two volumes whilst the most learned *churchmen—tythe-mongers*—have been settling the fate of Mr. Grattan. It is said to be untrue that the portrait has been destroyed; but is papered up, and stands behind the provost's chair, ready for another exhibition when the times change. *Vide Morning Chronicle*, Nov. 30, 1798.

ing censure, been followed by every parish in the kingdom; or, indeed, had it only been more general, it is very probable the priests, finding themselves in possession of this little salary, small as it was, yet, coming to them in so handsome a manner, from the parish at large, I say it is very probable; nay, more than probable, the present insurrection and rebellion would not have happened; but if it had broken out, it is very reasonable to believe, that we should not have heard of the number of priests who were found fighting so boldly in the front ranks of the insurgents. I consider what the Government of Ireland have recently done for the Roman Catholics, not having moderated the laws relating to, and the manner of collecting, Tythes, as stopping short of their design of healing animosities, holding out to them, as it were, a mere *nosegay* which afforded no *fragrance*, because they still keep back from the people that justice which their very singular and hard case demands.

To illustrate another passage in the early part of this Essay, viz. that the poorest of the people in general were the husbandmen, and contributed, by their industry in tillage, most to the payment of Tythes to the English Church, I beg leave to state a case, which every Irishman knows is not a singular one, but general throughout the kingdom, the south of Ireland in particular.

About sixteen years ago I personally knew one Constance, who held a farm belonging to Gibbon Fitzgibbon, Lord Clare's late father, consisting of nine acres only, including a very small orchard, situate close to the turnpike gate leading to the city of Limerick, for which he paid *six* pounds per acre, besides tythe of corn, hay, fruit, parochial, and county taxes. Constance was by trade a wheel maker, and his wife an industrious woman. With all their industry, the produce of the land, the orchard, wheel making, spinning, &c. and paying an annual rent of fifty-four pounds, a more wretched cabin and family I scarcely ever beheld all over Ireland. Constance did not hold under a *middle-man*. It matters little to the *husbandmen* in general whether they

they are tenants, immediately under the *original*, or a *secondary*, tyrant: the farmer, *must* pay the *rack-rent*, take it from whom he may. I left my horse to graze in this farm whilst I attended the assizes at Limerick, and had frequent opportunities of remarking the manners and mode of life of this family. Potatoes and butter milk was their general food. Except these two articles, and sometimes a herring, all the produce of their farm, all the man could earn in wheel making, all the woman could earn in spinning, was little enough to pay the landlord, the parson, and other taxes. They never slept upon a feather or any bed but straw; seldom tasted meat, but at the festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide. The poorest of the cabinneers will be *extravagant* out of respect to the *occasion*, although they have not, for months, afterwards a shoe or a stocking to wear.

Taking the whole of the case of these unhappy creatures together, in the recital of, and reflection on, which

“ a man may drop a tear, and be forgiv’n ;”

what reasonable person will wonder at insurrections in Ireland: and do not the before recited oppressions, if not *sufficiently*, in *some degree*, plead in their behalf, for the enormities they have committed?

I shall conclude this Narrative with just asking *Lord Clare*, and *all others* who keep a set of slaves, like the poor Constance, upon their estates, that if the House of Commons had attended to *Mr. Grattan’s application* in 1788, which, as will be seen, was to *alter the mode, not the amount, of the dues to the Clergy*, would the rebellion have happened in the extent it has done? Whether his Lordship of *Clare*, supposing the alteration, would have taken the advantage of the benevolence of Parliament, and have added to the *six pounds per acre*, paid by the said Constance, or any other of his tenants, alike situated, any additional sum, because, *instead of Tenths and Small Dues they were to pay the parson only an acreable stipend*; agreeably to the following Plan, which was published in Dublin in 1782, and is very similar to

to the one in the Appendix, which was offered to the consideration of the Irish Parliament in 1788.

A P L A N

for the better Maintenance of the Clergy in the Kingdom of Ireland

IN LIEU OF TYTHES.

I. Obtain the value of every parish, or union of parishes, or livings subject to Tythes, throughout the kingdom, for ten years past, distinguishing each year. Let the average of these ten years be taken, and whatever the sum shall amount to, fix that sum as the yearly income for the ministers of the several parishes for thirty-one years, and pay the same to the clergy without deduction, or any expence whatsoever, leaving the glebe lands, untouched, in their own possession.

II. Tythes, great and small, of every description to cease during the above mentioned term of years.

III. No surplice fees, purification money, &c. to be paid to the clergymen of the established church, but by persons of their own communion, or, *by those who make use of its services; and in this respect, to put the Irish upon the same footing as the people are in England; where, if the Clergy are not called upon for their Pater Noster, they act more charitable than the Irish Clergy, they extort no Pence.*

IV. Enter the minister's income yearly on the parish book amongst the sundry articles, as the sum necessary for the use of the church. Also, a farther sum of fifty pounds yearly for the priest of the Romish church, or a proportionate sum if he officiates in more parishes than one. The sum total, therefore, for religious purposes will then appear; and, let the amount be what it may, might be provided for partly by a *casual* revenue, in the following manner:

1. To the church wardens, one shilling per acre on all bishop's lands in the parish, to be paid by the tenant holding immediately under the bishop.—These lands are, in general, not the worst in the diocese, and are the lowest set in the kingdom; and, except perpetuities, are esteemed the most permanent and profitable leases that are held. The profits of these leases being generally very great, and, as church lands, not subject to Tythes, it is but reasonable that something should be paid out of them in the aggregate, in aid of the church.

2. To the church warden one shilling an acre on all abbey lands, for the several reasons before urged respecting bishops lands above mentioned, to be paid by the proprietors.—These lands are the best in the kingdom, and what is remarkable, have ever been exempt from Tythes.

3. To the church warden all surplice fees, or, if received by the parson, the amount to be carried to the credit of the parish.

If any other means can be found out in aid of the casual revenue of the church, or if any of the above articles should be thought exceptionable, the church wardens may make up the deficiency by a general tax per acre on the land of the parish at large, in the same manner as the county tax is apportioned; a method, even if the casual revenue were to produce little or nothing, would, in the opinion of many respectable gentlemen whom I have consulted, be much more equitable, and produce a more honourable maintenance for the clergy, than that of *tithes* and *small dues*, partially, and sometimes, as I have already shewn, oppressively exacted.

ON THE DIVINE RIGHT OF TYTHES.

The principle of the *divine right* to *Tithes* appears to be pretty generally despised. I have hitherto been considering Tythes merely as *temporals*; nor do I venture an opinion concerning the *spirituality* of them. Mr. Grattan, indeed, says something against it, (for which see the Appendix.) A work published by a Mr. Leslie is certainly the best defence of the *divine right* I have met with. Below are a few quotations *pro* and *con*, from Mr. Leslie and other collectors.

"If it be a truth, that we ought to honour the Lord with our substance; if that be part of his worship, of the honour due unto his name; if the determinate quantum of a tenth part has been the received notion and practice of the whole earth, ever since the beginning, as far as we have any account of time; if God has promised great blessings, as well temporal as eternal, to our performance of this part of religious worship, the due payment of Tythe to him, and threatened the neglect thereof with severe judgements, even to curse whole nations, accounting it as robbing of himself; and if we have seen this made good in the Heathen nations, as well as amongst Jews and Christians, and visited many years after it was committed, in following generations, to shew that he forgets not this sin, though he may long bear with it."

Mr. Leslie then concludes his book thus:

"And if a modern example will be any encouragement, he that writes this does assure the reader, that he knows now, at this present, where Tythes are, and have been some time, punctually paid according to the rules before set down, and *the effects have been wonderful, more than a hundred fold, and in manner extremely remarkable and surprising.*"

The Editor of the Gentleman's Magazine for May, 1789, p. 446, whence the above extracts are copied, rather sarcastically, as well as

la-

laconically, asks, as if he doubted the fact, What parish does the author allude to ? Again,

"Tythes in Flanders were formerly always taken in kind ; but, some crops were exempted from this abominable tax ; as to render Tythe free all grasses, cattle, and crops of the pulse kind. The farmer could not carry his corn subject to Tythe, until he had carried the tenth to the barn belonging to the Parson ; who contended here, that the Tythes belong to them of *divine right*." Granted for a moment ; but does it belong to them of *divine right* to collect it *oppressively*. *Annals of Agriculture*, vol. XIV. p. 330. 1790.

"And, anciently, when Tythes were apt to be considered as a spiritual property, held by *divine right*, it appears, that Popes exercised the power of exempting from Tythes, not only the lands of abbies and monasteries, but also those of some lay orders, such as the knights templars, and knights hospitalers ; and used to sell *bulls* or grants for this purpose ; till at last, an act was made to prevent it, 2 Hen. IV. ch. 4. [This act of prevention, however, never extended to Ireland.] By which it appears, that even in those days there existed a power of alienating the Tythes of the church, when there seemed to be a proper occasion. And the public welfare is surely a more important occasion than the gratification of an order of knights." Vide Plan for raising 3,000,000*l.* by the Sale of the Tythes in England, p. 20. 1798. published by Hatchard.

A P P E N D I X.

EXTRACT FROM THE DEBATES OF THE IRISH HOUSE OF COMMONS*, THURSDAY, FEB. 14, 1788, ON TYTHES.

MR. GRATTAN said it was not his intention to surprize the House, by introducing so important a subject as that of Tythes ; he would prefer submitting the grievances complained of by the peasantry to a committee, who would examine whether they really existed or not : for which purpose he moved, "*That a Committee be appointed to enquire if there is any just cause of*

* These debates were very generally circulated through both kingdoms, particularly in a pamphlet published by Mr. Ridgway in 1788. The Editor therefore will only take a short extract, the better to illustrate his own Narrative.

discontent in the province of Munster, and also to enquire if the late excesses committed in the province of Munster, and counties of Kilkenny and Carlow, were on account of Tythes, or on account of the collection of them; and also what redress should be afforded them; and to report their opinion thereon."

With respect to the payment of the clergy, whose incomes I would rather augment than diminish, three plans have occurred to me :

The first is, " To pay the clergy the full amount of what, on a fair average, they have received for several years prior to the disturbances complained of, which amount should be raised by apportionment in the manner of other country charges."

The second is, " To institute a general modus in lieu of Tythe."

The third is, " A combination of modus of commutation, by a general survey of every county; a certain sum to be allowed for every acre under tillage, and the whole county at large to be the security of the clergyman."

This I assert to be not only practicable, but easy of accomplishing, for similar surveys are every year made in almost every county in Ireland. Gentlemen must observe that there is a vast difference between a fair inquiry, which is the sole object of my motion, and a positive agreement, which may bind down Parliament to a specific plan.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, I differ altogether from the Right Honourable Gentleman as to the mode of taking up the subject. I cannot think it right, that, with the concurrence of this House, the *idea of redress* should be set afloat; thus to heat the imaginations of the people, without any positive remedy in view to allay them. I will not therefore consent to the Committee of Inquiry proposed by him, for I am sure that a more effectual means to increase the disturbances that exist, and to disturb the public tranquillity, could not be taken. My Right Honourable Friend has admitted it to be a matter of such difficulty, as to call for the greatest efforts of the wisest heads to determine it with prudence, and yet he wants the House to enter instantly into a Committee, in order to ascertain whether any just cause of discontent exists in the province of Munster, or in the counties of Kildare or Carlow, on account of Tythe, or the collection of Tythe; and if any, to report the same, with their opinion thereon. If his abilities, confessedly so great, have not been able to devise any plan which he can vouch for, and positively recommend, I think it would be madness

to agitate the subject at all. But if he is in possession of any system, in God's name, let him propose it. He well knows that the House will listen with partiality to any proposal coming from him. If it shall appear to be such as I can approve, I shall certainly support it; if not, I must only vote against it.

LORD KINGSBOROUGH seconded Mr. Grattan's motion. I cannot, said his Lordship, forbear mentioning the oppressions and distresses under which the poor in the south of Ireland labour. I reside in that part of the kingdom, and therefore cannot be ignorant of them. The people who cultivate the poor lands in the county of Cork are utterly unable to pay Tythe of any kind, and yet Tythe of every kind is most rigorously demanded from them. Many demands made by the clergy are illegal. I have myself been cited to an ecclesiastical court for payment of an illegal demand, and which, illegal and exorbitant as it was, I should have been obliged to comply with, without ever having joined issue, *were I a poor man*. If a Committee is appointed, gentlemen will have an opportunity of entering into the merits of the business.

MR. BROWNE, (of the College) said he felt much difficulty in opposing the Right Honourable Gentleman, whose romantic success and splendid abilities had long insured his triumph. He could not however at present submit to his motion, it being in his mind replete with an inconsistency that did not usually mark his measures. The honourable member, continued he, *has established our constitutional rights on a solid foundation*, but would he now shake it by suffering an innovation on our ecclesiastical system? It would, said he, be a task replete with difficulty and danger to attempt altering so ancient a system; and the absurdity of such a measure being adopted, having no colour of reason why it should, was so evident, that any remark on it would appear superfluous to the House. He asked Mr. Grattan, who authorised him to become the arbiter between the clergy and *their flock*? * Mr. Browne concluded by declaring that, consistently with *his* principles, he should oppose the motion for a Committee.

MR. GRATTAN. If I can judge from appearances, there seems to be a determined opposition to this measure. My predicament must of course be a

* See note in p. 12 of the foregoing narrative.

singular one, as I am censured by one Honourable Gentleman for *not* producing a plan, and by another for *producing* one which has been emphatically declared to threaten injury to the state. Thus, by the same species of sophistry, I am charged with being an arbiter between the clergy and their flock without any authority. If it is criminal to wish to heal the breach subsisting between the clergy and the laity; then I have materially erred; if to deny me the opportunity of doing this is meritorious, the people of Ireland must be convinced to whom they are obliged. Are not the commotions that disturbed the peace of the country too notorious to be denied? Is it not the usage of the parliaments of both kingdoms, in similar cases, to investigate the cause, and strike at the root of the evil. If this has been the case, then, Sir, I tread on constitutional ground, and will not hesitate to say, that an inquiry *ought* to be made, *and if it* should appear that the subject *is oppressed, redress should* follow. If you deny this, you deny the *existence* of the constitution. Sir, there are men ready to appear at your bar, who are enabled to prove on their oaths, that the commonalty are monstrously aggrieved. Call these men to your bar; humanity demands it, and their oppressions require it; and if they cannot clearly support their allegations, it will be to the House a matter of triumph. It is, Sir, painful to reflect that so much oppression exists, that this oppression falls chiefly on that most useful body, our husbandmen.

It has been asserted on the part of the clergy, or rather of their proctors, that though their charges sometimes carried the feature of extortion, still the full tenth was seldom taken; and they even dared the oppressed to shew one instance where any part of the laity's property had been illegally Tythed. The last assertion I am warranted to say is a glaring violation of truth, for I can shew, to the full satisfaction of this House, that turf has been Tythed—*illegally* Tythed. And, also, where men have been refractory, and would not submit to what they knew was a gross imposition, that they have been dragged before an ecclesiastical court; that the decision of these disgraceful courts made the defendants enter into security for the illegal payment of Tythe of turf, and not being able to accomplish that payment, wretches who had scarcely a rag to protect them from the inclemency of the elements, were cast into a loathsome prison—became *martyrs to extortion, and victims*

to violated justice.—Sir, it is obvious and degrading to the constitution, to see *extortion* assume the *power* of legislation, and commuting its own exaction by laying a tax of two shillings on each hearth for *Tythe* of poor creatures, many of whom had not a coal to kindle. Is not such rapacity contrary to justice, and repugnant to law? for the law particularly exempts creatures of poor condition from the *national* hearth tax; which, under the name of smoke-money, is seized on by the rigorous and relentless *Tythe* proctor. I have the opinion of a learned lawyer, who as been lately translated to the seat of justice, to say that the parson, the proctor, or *Tythe* farmer, who presumes to exact a *Tythe* of turf, or the tax of smoke-money, and the ecclesiastical judge who acquiesces with them, all act contrary to law, were liable to exemplary punishment. [*A cry of hear, hear.*] A *Tythe* of furze has also been claimed and obtained, though they were not cut for sale, but spent or consumed on the premises; nay, the most trifling article of the wretched parishioner falls a sacrifice to the grasp of avarice. I now ask, Gentlemen, is it possible for exaction to invent a more cruel and severe tax than these I submit for consideration? Than the first charge nothing can be more exorbitant, except the enormous charge of the proctor, which is 2s. in the pound, for collecting his own exaction, a tax that may as justly be levied for the support of the clergyman's domestics.—After this fair and plain statement of facts, can it be said that there has been neither oppression nor extortion in Munster? No, surely, since every thing paid *Tythe* in that province, that paid *Tythe* any where else; and potatoes, ~~flax~~, and turf were also *tythed* there, that were *tythed* *no where* else.

Having now clearly shewn, Sir, that the southern counties have been particularly aggrieved, I shall proceed to state the *Tytheable* prices charged for the different productions of the earth, in the parishes then recently disturbed; which are according to the following statement: *Wheat* from 12s. to 20s. per acre. *Potatoes* from 8s. to 19s. ditto. *Barley* from 9s. to 13s. ditto. *Oats* from 6s. to 10s. ditto. *Meadow* from 4s. to 7s. ditto. *Flax* from 11s. to 15s. ditto. Besides, For a little garden 19s. In the county of Cork, the ratages are: *Potatoes* 16s. per acre. *Wheat* 16s. ditto. *Barley* 9s. 9d. ditto. *Oats* 8s. ditto. *Meadowing* 6s. ditto. Exclusive of this general statement, Sir, I shall produce other instances of uncommon extortion, where wheat, potatoes, flax, &c. are *Tythed* by *the stone*; rape also, which the legislature

gislature thought it wisdom to cultivate, has been taxed enormously. In Ulster, Sir, the farmer pays but sixpence for his flax, be the quantity great or small. In Munster they have exceeded all bounds. Is not this, Sir, an encroachment, and such a one as fully accounts for the discontent of the people? for it is not merely that a living has grown from sixty pounds to three hundred, but the gains of the Proctor and Tythe-farmers, who extracted from the peasant, full twice as much as went into the pocket of the parson. In corroboration of farther monstrous extortion, I shall read the deposition of a respectable farmer.

No. I. states that he was charged 16s. an acre Tythe for oats. No. IV. states that he was obliged to pay 24s. for two English acres of wheat, and for bull potatoes *, 17s. an acre. No VI. states that he was charged 40s. an acre for potatoes, which he refused to pay; and having been cast in a suit, a decree was obtained against him, which amounted to sixteen pounds costs! No. XVI. shews that deponent paid 15s. an acre for wheat. And No. XVIII. asserts that he paid fourteen pounds to the clergyman, having been charged at the rate of one pound two shillings per acre Tythe for potatoes. These facts, Sir, are supported upon oath; and there can be no doubt of their authenticity. Such, I lament to say, are the exactions practised on the Irish Peasantry—such are the extortions, nay crimes, that bear the mild name of oppression—such are the iniquitous extortions that call loudly and justly for reformation. I am concerned to find that Tythes of turf, potatoes, and smoke-money, are with impunity levied contrary to law. The peasant who resists this cruel violation of justice, and flies for protection to a petty court, soon, to his destruction, discovers that which should have been his asylum receives him as a devoted victim; that by the collusion of the court, or the imbecility of the judge, he falls a sacrifice to his temerity, and a decree is obtained which involves him and his family in certain ruin.

I shall now advert, Sir, to what has been advanced, that the ecclesiastical courts would afford redress to the complainants, and relieve them from such heavy oppressions. But, Sir, it is well known that the Vicar's Court is like a Polish Diet, distinguished only for injustice, and party; the Judge is always

* An ordinary sort for fattening hogs and feeding horses and other cattle.

one of the body, or else his appointment proceeds from it; and though in some cases the flagrant justice of the individual might controul the partial umpire, yet the constitution of the court is such, that none but a partial judge has *ever been known to preside there*. That the ecclesiastical court is a most expensive and grievous judicature, I presume no man of candour will deny. It is well known to the House that the costs and expences of a suit in the Vicars Court are seldom less than 1l. 6s. 8d. though the sum litigated may not be more than 5s. In addition to this grievance, the incompetency of a witness is of no avail to set aside his evidence;—nay, though he were the proctor, or servant of the party, and his bias and corruption were evident, still his evidence is admissible; notwithstanding he viewed the crop in the infancy of vegetation, or the ground *at the time was red**, when it was impossible, with any degree of certainty, to anticipate its value, and frequently guesses at the quantum of land, produce, and value, without survey, weight, or measure. In the year 1786, I can prove from indisputable evidence, the Tythes of many farms amounted to the rack rent of the landholder; and I am assured that it is a practice to charge the unsuspecting husbandman for more acres than he really possesses. I have a survey, sworn to, that not only proves this, and the infamous exaction of the proctor, but plainly shews that, in many instances, not only the *tenth*, but the *fourth* is extorted from the unprotected peasant.

Surely, Sir, it will not be asked, after what I have stated, is there not a remedy for such egregious imposition? That question has been already answered by what I advanced respecting the impotency of inferior courts, where the expence attending the failure of the parishioner's suit must be attended by certain destruction.—This, Sir, causes a fear, that operates to the advantage of the proctor, &c. and prevents the object of their plunder from seeking redress in a summary way. I lament, Sir, that the clergy are so very tenacious, that they will not suffer or give their approbation to any alteration in a system that has, time immemorial, given rise to persecutions and prosecutions in this kingdom †. The mild spirit of the Gospel does

* A term in Ireland, for such fields where the corn is not altogether above the ground, sufficient to cover the natural appearance of the land. Edit.

† It has before been observed that it is not altogether the fault of the clergy. See narrative, p. 12. Edit.

not say, that *oppression* is of *divine right*—that the elemental tythe of fire shall roast the tythe-pig of the parson, or that it is just to receive tythe of a wretched cottier *, which amounts nearly to the rack-rent he pays for his farm.

Sir, the progress of a suit in the *Irish ecclesiastical courts*, is attended with double the expence of a suit carried on in the ecclesiastical courts of England, and is at best a penal remnant of barbarity, that requires immediate annihilation.

I shall now, Sir, recur to the enormities practised in the levying of Tythes, and for the purpose of convincing the House of the truth of my allegations, I shall, with permission of the House, read an extract from a letter written to me by a gentleman in Cashel †, for whose veracity I can vouch.

[Read a letter which took a view of the progress of tything from the year 1774 to 1783; which Mr. Grattan, after furnishing the House with, proceeded in the following manner to comment on.]

Sir, it appears that in the year 1783, a year of famine, for two hundred and sixty-five barrels of wheat one pound an acre has been charged, according to the average produce of preceding years, uncommonly productive. The Vicars' Court in the diocese of Cashel, appears, from incontrovertible evidence, to be a most iniquitous one. [Copies of decrees taken from the rule-book of that court, Mr. Grattan now read.]

Thus, Sir, it plainly appears that the court calculated the number of barrels, which the acre of potatoes, wheat, or oats *might* produce, either on

* Mr. Grattan makes no distinction, throughout his speech, between the *Roman Catholic* and the *Protestant* cottier. I never saw a *wretched* Protestant farmer; indeed they are *very* *thinly* planted, but those I have been acquainted with are, what is termed *warm*; meaning in a good way; the poor Roman catholic in general is the *victim*. There are various opportunities, however, for the proctors to be partial in their assessment, whom they will they oppress; and, *vice versa*, indulge; those who go to church pay the smallest rateage to the church. Edit.

† I always understood that the oppressions of Tythes in the North, and in Connaught, &c. were as much complained of as in Munster. The facts in my Narrative, none of them originate in Munster; but are practised in Leinster, Ulster, and Connaught. I apprehend Mr. Grattan's *smoke* money to the parson, in the *south*, to be applicable, and to mean the same as my *family* money in the North; his *oblation* money in the south, to my *purification* money in Leinster, Ulster, and Connaught. Edit.

the superficial and partial view of the farm, or the most extraordinary or partial estimate of their proctors.

I condemn exceedingly the uncertainty of such grounds for the decision of property; the minute division in barrels and stones, is an ingenious, but exceptionable, device to accumulate exaction on the poor.

Such abominable extortion, I am sorry to observe, is *peculiar to this country*, and extremely injurious to its commercial interests; a tax on grain *dissipates the spirit of industry*, by driving the peasant from the plough to less valuable pursuits; a bold and robust peasantry is the strength of the empire, and the sinews of commerce; they should be cherished by the legislature with a parental affection; *I therefore call upon Government to alleviate their wrongs, which it will completely do*, by regulating that system which is no less a degradation to the clerical character, than it is repugnant to the precepts of Christianity and sound policy.

Sir, from the law decrees I have read, it is obvious, that the parson and proctors claim and receive *market prices* for Tythes; whereas in justice, in equity, and in law, *field prices can only be demanded*; to insist on market price is a monstrous exaction, it is claiming a Tythe of labour, as well as of property, as no allowances are made for digging and drawing; no recompence given for the trouble or labour of the peasant.

Sir, it appears that in the year 1774, which was a year of scarcity, that for 350 barrels of beer, or bear, 40 barrels had been exacted for Tythe.

130 barrels of oats were charged proportionably.

4256 stones of potatoes were charged 425 stones for Tythe.

Hay had been charged 10s a ton *.

47 acres of wheat charged a guinea an acre; and meadow 12s.

Thus it is plainly proved, by these decrees, that the rateages are exorbitant; but even these extortions will appear trivial, when compared to the rapaciousness of 1783, which was a year of famine! During this year potatoes had been rated, according to the decree, one guinea an acre—an equitable famine price!—flax above one guinea an acre, another equitable famine

* The Editor has sold, retail, a whole year's crop of hay from off a farm in the county of Westmeath for 20s. a ton; paid 50s. per acre for his land. Mr. Champness, the vicar of Mullingar, at 4s. an acre, cleared a greater profit from off my meadows, that year, than I did. Edit.

price!

price!—hay 10s. a ton, a very equitable famine price!—to which is tacked 1l. 6s. 8d. cost—all, all equitable famine rateages!

From this statement, nothing is more obvious than that the clergy and their proctors had set forth a plenty produce, and thereto annexed a famine price, availing themselves of famine, which was unchristian, uncharitable, and making plenty itself the scourge of the farmer.

That this had been done appeared evident from the decrees in cases of poor people, who, to a good Christian, should have been objects of succour, particularly in a year of scarcity, and not the devoted objects of extortion and exaction.

In the county of Antrim no Tythe is demanded for potatoes *; all the other Tythe-rates are equally reasonable with those I have before stated.

When a minister of the Gospel visits a parishioner so circumstanced, and claims twelve or fifteen, or sometimes twenty shillings, for an acre of tillage, he demands a CHILD'S SHARE; he extracts alms from a beggar, he adds famine to poverty †.

Sir, I cannot avoid combating the prevalent opinion, that gentlemen should support the clergy in upholding a system, that has neither equity nor justice to recommend it; this indeed would be a criminal partiality.

Is it because *the burden is removed from the shoulders of the rich to those of the poor* ‡? Is it under such narrow and confined considerations you mock the complaints of the peasantry, and refuse your aid to remove their oppression?

Besides the accumulated distresses Tythes bring on the miserable tenantry, I do insist that no system has ever been adopted in this country which more effectually involves its interest. Tythes, as operating against agriculture, excite depopulation, and are inconsistent with industry.

I cannot avoid expressing my abhorrence at clergymen interfering in sanguinary punishments §.

* Query.

† See the case of Constance, co. Limerick, in the province of Munster. Edit.

‡ See narrative, p. 4.

§ It is bad policy to appoint so many of the clergy to the commission of the peace, by which they have an opportunity of enforcing their own extortion. Edit.

Sir,

Sir, how disgraceful must it appear to see an extensive army, sent to fight the battles of the clergy and their proctors? How dreadful, how fatal had been the consequences were they led to action by a barbarian or a bigot!

Now, after having made these statements, I shall observe, that though there is no circumstance adequate to create or to justify disturbance, there is no one object so likely to excite commotion as a scarcity of the necessaries of life; nothing can tend so much to cause that scarcity as the exorbitance of Tythe-demands*. If, therefore, you wish the peace and tranquillity of the kingdom, you will take necessary measures to prevent that exorbitance, the first step to which purpose is the appointment of a Committee of Inquiry on the alledged grievances.

These are weighty grievances, and of themselves should indicate the necessity of speedy regulation. But this necessity will more strongly appear from the six allegations which I hold in my hand, and which evidence are ready to attest on oath at the bar of your House.

ALLEGATIONS.

I. *That in certain parishes in the south, Tythe has been demanded and paid for articles not Tytheable by law.*

II. *That the Tythe rectory in certain parishes in the south, do ask, extort, and receive from the poor parishioner, one or two shillings in the pound under the description of rectorage, a demand oppressive and illegal.*

III. *That in certain parishes in the south, demands for Tythe had been excessive, and have not observed any equity in favour of the husbandman, the poor, or the manufacturer.*

IV. *That in certain parishes in the south, the ratages for Tythe have of late years greatly and rapidly increased, insomuch that certain livings in the course of a few years have increased three, four, or five fold †.*

* One cause of scarcity of grain in Ireland, not before mentioned, is the quantity of Tythe articles every year destroyed by incendiaries, where ever it is found; and, with it, whole haggards of other property. It is a severe reproach, that so fine a country as Ireland should be obliged to import grain every year for the subsistence of its inhabitants; but it is a fact; and is attributed solely to the Tythe Laws. See Arthur Young's Table of Imports of Grain. Tour in Ireland, vol. II. part 2. p. 115, &c. Edit.

† See A. Young's Table of Tythes, taken in 1779, Tour in Ireland, vol. II. part 2. p. 79. Edit.

V. *That in certain parishes in the south, the parishioners have duly and legally set out their Tythe, and given due notice, but that no person has attended on the part of the praetor or minister, under the expectation, they suppose, of getting some other mode of recovery, tending to deprive the parish of its legal right of setting out the Tythe.*

VI. *That the Tythe-farmers in certain parishes of the south have oppressed, and do oppress his Majesty's subjects, by various ways of extortion, assuming to themselves, arbitrarily and cruelly, powers which the laws do not give; and by making a barbarous use of such powers as the law has put into their hands; all which, six several allegations, they are ready to verify on oath at the bar of the House of Commons.*

By suffering the business to go into Committee, and after examining facts, we shall, I am convinced, be able to ascertain the grievance complained of, and to discover a suitable remedy. Let us not be dissuaded by the aversion of the clergy from altering a system, which impelling the lower classes to despair, subjects them to sanguinary punishment, and diminishes the revenue of the clergy themselves*.

I will now lay the sketch of a plan before the House, which, if adopted, will remove every difficulty, and be equally beneficial to the clergy and laity.

I would give the standard of grain, for the value of money; I would let the officer who strikes the average of grain for the county, strike it for seven years, for which space of time, this average should be a rule for regulation of Tythes, to be a solemn compact between the clergy and laity; a similar estimate to be made at the expiration of the next seven years; thus to proceed in regular gradation, by which an effectual caution will be established against injury to the clergy, from a decrease in the value of specie. I think the mode of levying a tax of this nature for the support of the clergy should be *by applotment*, for that is a plan the common people are best acquainted with in raising public money, upon which, in my experience, *I have never heard of discontent or murmuring.*

Consonant to this plan, I would totally exempt from all Tythe-rates the food and fuel of the poor cottager—potatoes and turf in all parts of the

* See note * last page.

kingdom.—I would also take such precautions as would prevent the growth of such articles as are essential to manufactures from being retarded either by a total abolition of Tythe on them, or by substituting a very light commutation. But I would make compensation to the clergy for the vote of agistment.—*I would have all the grazing grounds which are now exempt, contribute an acreable allowance.* This would evidently befriend agriculture, and by being collected in the manner of a parish cess, would obviate all the trouble attendant on Tythe at present, such as viewing, canting*, and setting.—This plan, I pledge myself, would produce a system of equality† as yet unknown. The rates under it when in estimation would be,

Wheat, per acre, 5s. 5d.—Barley, ditto, 2s. 6d.—Potatoes, where cultivated in any quantity, 6d. an acre.—And all other rateages would be equally reasonable.

The *divine right* of Tythes has been ever set up by the clergy in opposition to the *sacrilegious* efforts of the laity to abolish them.—To anticipate this argument is no great proof of penetration; to refute it, requires no great degree of logic. If we give ourselves time to trace the origin of Tythes, we shall have no great cause to exult in our imitation.—In the early days of darkness and bigotry, an ignorant people were not averse to sustain the luxuries of the church—Bigotry and a blind enthusiasm favoured the wishes of the priest, and the laity subscribed cheerfully to his support—The want of money gave the first rise to tything; the people were bigots and barbarians, and their priests were sensualists and extortioners—The situation of the world was such in the antediluvian æra, and the scarcity of money was so prevalent, that Tythes were naturally fixed upon as the most eligible provision for the clergy.

The Jews, Sir, as having favoured the custom of tything, seem to have laid down such a maxim for the conduct of Christians, as Christians fear to violate. When I hear the stubborn arguments used by the ecclesiastics of the church of Ireland‡, in favour of *divine right*, it excites my indignation.

* Selling by auction. Edit.

† And of tranquillity too. Edit.

‡ I have, in my Narrative, called the church of Ireland the *English* church. If the English did not begin the Reformation in Ireland, they completed it; and the manner of public worship is exactly similar. Edit.

The clergy who make use of such an argument are unacquainted with the subject of Tythes, else they would despise opposing it to the opposition of the laity ; for the first mention we find of Tythes in holy writ, is of *Abraham*, who redeemed his kinsman *Lot* with his substance—Pagans improved on the system of Jews, and the Christians of the present æra improve upon both ; sorry am I to see the example of Jews and idolators held so sacred among Christians.—Tythes were founded in the days of darkness, and they are continued at the present enlightened period, through wickedness and perverseness.—This House is not a synagogue of Jews ; why, therefore, so tenaciously adhere to Jewish customs, *except there is something rational to recommend the custom or usage ?*—As well may you contend for a revival of their preposterous customs, their purifications * and their circumcisions, as to argue and infer, that because Tythe was *their* mode of payment it should be adopted and continued by us.

When the gross idolatries and the vile abominations which over-run this terrestrial habitation superceded the Christian religion, were Tythes continued, or is there an instance of their being demanded ?—Were Tythes demanded under the Christian doctrine, or under the dispensation of the Gospel ? Did the primitive ministers of Christianity demand Tythes ? Or is there any proof that they depended on Tythes for their support ? If they did not, I say the claims of the clergy for Tythes are unchristian-like ; it is an avaricious demand, united with avarice and extortion, which not only deprives it of all force and validity, but renders opposition to it by no means criminal.

Are not the words of the great Redeemer of mankind repugnant to the exactions of the clergy of this day ? What does he say ? “ Beware of covetousness.” — When the Messiah, with his Apostles, entered the dwelling of the Gentiles, he said “ Peace be to this house ”—Not *Tythes*. Does this seem to sanction a demand of the soil’s produce ?

The Council of Constance, I admit, may be adduced against our interference, in the system of Tythes.—The Council of Lateran, and Council of Nantz, denounced vengeance, and thundered their anathemas against all those who refused to pay Tythe. . The sentiments of St. Augustine and St.

* I have shewn, p. 13, that *purification money* is rigorously demanded. Edit.

Jerome were coincident with these; as was also Juno's, who gave Priapus, the genius of war, all the Tythes of spoils that Mars gained in battle, for *learning him to dance!* Eudemus mentions a kind of beast in Africa, that seems thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of Tythes; these animals always eat *ten* parts of their prey, leaving the eleventh as a kind of *first fruit*. One would have thought that this fancied description of Eudemus was a prophecy of the rapacity of our modern clergy.

As to Augustine, Sir, he was a good and a religious man: to prevent sensuality and feasting, he claimed Tythe of the persons who dined within his holy district. His demand being complied with, the Saint, following the example of other ghostly Fathers, spent, in personal appropriations and revelry, a tax that was levied under the specious pretext of curbing immorality and dissipation.

Tythes, Sir, were not introduced into England till about the fourth century; and what gave rise to them at that time will be no great matter of triumph to the clergy. The pious King of Mercia perpetrated a barbarous murder; and, to expiate the horrid crime, and save the souls of his mother, his grandmother, and ancestors, he not only caused Tythes to be rigorously exacted from his subjects, but paid them himself. A laudable instance that a system founded on so righteous a measure should not suffer by innovation! I should mention that the paying of Tythes, after their establishment in England, was for near a century peculiar to the kingdom of Mercia, but was about the year 1400 introduced throughout England by an equally pious and sanguinary monarch*.

* In the General Survey of England, 1086, the mention of Tythes is very rare, even when churches are mentioned. The truth seems to be, that the custom of paying Tythes to the parish priests was not in the time of this survey generally established. And, in Leicestershire, as far as appears, it was *nowhere* the usage, but the occupier of the land might pay Tythes to what church he pleased. Dissertation on Domesday, prefixed to Mr. Nichols's "History of Leicestershire," p. xl. where much information concerning Tythes in that part of the *kingdom of Mercia* may be seen. They often paid Tythe to the place they had a mind to be buried at; and such had been the custom, to pay them where they pleased. Dugdale's Warw. p. 11. There are frequent instances of lands being situated in one parish, which are rated in the books of another to the parson or impropiator, of which the Tythes of those lands are also paid. Note to the above quotation from Nichols's Leicestershire, p. xli. They consulted in Oxford where they might find the best argument for their Tythes; setting aside the *jus divinum*. Selden on Tythes.

To demonstrate that Tythes have ever been subject to innovation, you have only to recur to an act made in the fifth of Henry IV. "Where a bill passed the Commons against the EXACTIONS of tythe of quarries and tythe of slate."

In the 31st of Henry VIII. chap. 13. it was enacted, that "the king and his patentees should hold their possession of the dissolved monasteries discharged and acquitted of the payment of Tythes, as freely, and in as large and ample a manner as the houses of religion held them at the time of their dissolution."

Sir, the instances of innovations are numberless, and are as glaring as the exactions practised in levying Tythes are notorious. It may be a matter not unworthy the attention of the House, to calculate all the certain and incidental expences of cultivation; it amounts at least to a demand of one-sixth, beyond dispute. But when the one-tenth is demanded, if you calculate justly, you will find, that with the labour, and all the certain and incidental expences of cultivation, it amounts at least to a demand of *one-sixth*, that is, "*one-sixth of the whole produce of the kingdom would fall to the share of eight or nine hundred individuals—while, for the remaining two millions nine hundred and above ninety-nine thousand inhabitants, would only be left to divide amongst them, the remaining five parts,*" a grievance so monstrous as, *prima facie*, to speak for itself. But it will be objected that the demand of the full tenth is not made: *for that very reason a regulation is necessary.*

An idea has gone abroad, that it is the *duty* of gentlemen, *at all events*, to protect the clergy in their present system. This is an aspersion of their own character, because they are interested in so doing. It is right to support the clergy honourably; it should be the first object of every man. [*hear! hear!*] I say so, because I think the support of Christianity the first duty.

What LUTHER did for us, philosophy has done for the Roman Catholics: ELIZABETH and LUTHER dared a reformation in the church, and who will be bold enough to say we are less competent than they?

The proctors, you are convinced, are not only collectors of Tythes, but gatherers of taxes.—They are appointed by the parson, as a shepherd appoints his dog, *to watch over the flock*; like wolves, they devour the flock, and deceive

deceive the pastor ! Their office of tax-gatherer is procured by the interest of their employers ; and so faithful are they to the interest of their pastors, they often remit the tax and levy the Tythe. Thus the clergy and Tythe-proctors have set up a little commutation of their own, which they enjoy in privacy and peace, though they are hostile to the idea of the legislature adopting one, and invoke all the saints to arms, on bare mention of the word amongst the representatives of the people ! For such taxes as are not paid, the proctor gets the note of the peasant ; these notes * are known in that part of the kingdom by the appellation of Kerry Bonds ; and by that means, terrifying him with the picture of a prison, he gets him soul and body into his possession ! Oppressing not only the subject, but defrauding the revenue !

I can adduce instances where the parishioner has been compelled to pay ten per cent. for the privilege of paying full tenths to the parson ! I have besides, the schedules of the proctor's demands, and which I will oppose to the idea of an undervaluation. These schedules run thus—"so much for barley—so much for oats—so much for wheat—so much for potatoes." Now they are all high rateages—and in addition to the parson's exorbitance is the proctor's demand of 2s. in the pound for his trouble ; an excess, one tenth of the whole sum.

I do not condemn the proctor for making the most of his trade, which is *exaction*, but I condemn the laws for leaving the division of property to the discretion of a wretch, who only follows his nature, when he excises upon the most wretched, and the most helpless part of the community.

The hapless people of the south are husbandmen from necessity not choice. They have no other means of existence. They are obliged, in many places, to clamber mountains, rocks, and precipices, to snatch from sterility a little spot of ground, and oppose indefatigable industry to the natural stubbornness of the soil ; and they are compelled to wade to cultivation through bogs and morasses ; labouring thus to reclaim watery spaces and dismal voids, to add to the productive grounds of the kingdom. And for all their exertion, what is their reward ? none—but on the contrary, while it distinguishes them as the most useful

* See A. Young, Narrative, p. 4.

members of society, it subjects them to the predatory grasp of avaricious proctors, and unfeeling Tythe-farmers. In England these lands would for seven years be exempt from taxes of any description, under the sanction of the laws. In Ireland they are not only obliged to contribute their proportion of taxes, but Tythe of every denomination is most rigorously demanded from them. The wretched mountaineers, who cultivate them, are obliged for some crops to pay thirty shillings an acre for Tythe; for wheat, where raised, fourteen shillings an acre; oats, potatoes, and indeed every other article, are rated upon a similar scale of cruelty and rapine. But this payment of Tythe is not all. These mountaineers are obliged to submit to a poll-tax, to the charge of smoke-money, to several other ecclesiastical impositions: such as *fees for oblations, fees for religious ceremonies, and other fantastical charges, grounded on the grossest superstition, and enforced with unabating severity* *.

Where can the tenantry of Ireland look for protection if you deny them assistance? They are the pillars of the state, and, if not humanity, good policy ought at least to guide you to cherish them. You complain *they are intractable*; there is no animal so fierce but can be tamed, save the tyger; yet he is in some measure to be subdued. If you wish to conciliate him, feed him well. Try the experiment, I entreat you.

I know it will be said, if you ease them of their burden in this respect, that it will afford but the momentary ease of shifting it from one shoulder to another; that rents will immediately rise. I deny it. I say it is an odious, an infamous libel on the gentry of the nation. I say it is a scandalous imputation on both houses of Parliament, who are all possessed of lands, to suppose that they would avail themselves of their own act; to suppose that they would take a base advantage of the clemency of the legislature, and shamefully filch for their own use what was intended for the sustenance of the peasantry.

I laugh at the idea that Parliament cannot interfere in the business, because Tythes are private property. I say they are public property, to defray

* By the Protestant clergy too! who are ever preaching, to *their own flock*, against superstitious ceremonies practised by the church of Rome. Thus we see, even superstition may be made palatable to a reformed priest; when accompanied with that which procures him his *tea and sugar*. Edit.

a public expence, which is the maintenance of the clergy. Besides, there is this difference to be observed : the law gives no man a private property, it only protects him in the possession of it. Now the law gives the clergy their support, and giving it, can assuredly regulate that property. I glory in the power ; nay, in the omnipotence of Parliament in this respect ; and I hope it will be exercised in this instance to expose the fallacy of an argument which has been so industriously circulated.

What ! will this honourable House continue to view with silent apathy, a system of oppression which does no honour to the legislative character ? Will this honourable House say it is not competent to the task of reforming Tythes, and ecclesiastical dues ?—What ! are you, after having restored your appellat jurisdiction—are you, who were competent to decide, as you did, on the tenantry bill—to emancipate your constitution, and to establish your independence—incompetent to alter and approve ; nay, pull down a structure whose basis is exaction, and whose support is matchless oppression ?

Another argument founded upon the danger of innovation may be urged ; but it is equally fallacious.—The same argument might be used against any improvement.—What is the glorious constitution you possess but innovation ? Innovation upon a monarchy in the hands of a despotic prince ? What is the mild and amiable religion you profess, the protestant religion, but an innovation ? What is it but Christianity rescued out of the hands of an ambitious, a corrupt, and avaricious priesthood ? When bloody Herod was informed that the forerunners of the Redeemer of mankind were preaching the virtues of humility and true religion, he deemed it innovation, and he committed indiscriminate massacre to extirpate the Son of God, whom he pronounced an innovator ! The revolution itself, which introduced arts, sciences, and learning, was deemed an innovation ! It is an abuse of terms to call improvement innovation. Salutary alteratives which amend the debilitated constitution are justly termed restoratives ; and the same will hold good applied to the state, as well as applied to the human frame.

Without renovation there had been no revelation ? Harken, I again call on you, to the complaints of the people, and do not permit the luxury of the clergy to make the altar the stepping stool to usury and abomination.

The source of your reason tells that you should *embrace every* sect of religion; how then can you hope to receive sovereign mercy if you are deaf to the cries of your fellow creatures?

The doctrine of the dark conclave of bigotry, which, bursting, overwhelmed the nations of the earth, may be urged in favour of such criminal apathy; but the pangs of him who suffered a cruel crucifixion will rush from the sepulchre, to upbraid you with ingratitude *and involve your future tranquility.* *

Do not eviscerate the bowels of the wretches that implore your protection. The Christian church *cannot exist* on the ruins of barbarity; the pillars of extortion and rapaciousness but deface the noble structure, level them with the dust, and restore it to its primitive splendour.

You have resorted to the engines of coercion and penal laws, to give tranquillity to the kingdom, *but you never thought of an engine which would have answered the purpose with a thousand times more efficacy, the engine of redress.* 'Tis not yet too late to use it. Convince the people, I conjure you, for once, that you consider them objects of your care. Impress them with this gratifying sentiment; there is not a speck on the map of your country which is not the object of your earnest solicitude; and this you will do by suffering the business to go into Committee. *I implore the country gentlemen particularly,* by their virtue, their justice, their honour, by their feelings, their regard of humanity, their love of their country, but above all, by that latent spark which I know to be their composition, and which I have often seen blaze forth, and leave in eclipsed degradation the abashed servants of the Crown. We shall then have laid the foundation of an inquiry which must enforce us *a happy peasantry a venerable priesthood, and a contented people.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said in reply, that in the south of Ireland that cause of discontent did exist, no one will deny, but I deny that these discontents were owing to the clergy. I am ready to admit that these discontents might be owing to the improper and rapacious conduct of the tythe-

* One would almost be led to imagine, by recent transactions, that the orator's lips had been touched by a *live coal* from the sacred altar, and that he spoke the language of a prophet. Edit.

proctors, but there are laws already in existence to take cognizance of their conduct.

After some other speeches to the same purpose in support of the system of *tenths* and *small dues* to the clergy, too long for my purpose, Mr. Grattan's motion was negatived.

CONCLUSION.

THE foregoing statement of facts will require but little time to be properly authenticated; when they are ascertained, as short a period will be necessary to remove some of the grievances complained of. Under a strong persuasion that the *surplice* fees set forth in the foregoing pages are *all illegal*; that is, that they militate against the *common law of England*, which is the *same* in Ireland, I challenge an appeal to the twelve Irish judges, whose opinion, as to legality, may be soon taken upon the following questions:

1. Is it *legal* for the ministers of the *Church of Ireland* to exact MARRIAGE Money from the Roman Catholics when joined in wedlock *by their own priests*?
2. Is it *legal* for the ministers aforesaid to exact CHRISTENING and PURIFICATION Money, from Roman Catholics, or from other Nonconformists, not requiring the ceremonies of the church?
3. Is it *legal* for the Ministers aforesaid, to exact from LODGERS and other ROOM KEEPERS, a tax called FAMILY Money, in lieu of Tythes?
4. Is it *legal* for the said Ministers to exact a tax from poor Cottagers denominated SMOKE Money, in lieu of Tythe?
5. Is it *legal* for the said Ministers to exact a Tythe of turf?

Should these several questions, after a grave investigation, be answered, as I think they must be answered, in the negative, this opinion will, when promulgated, be equal in fact to the promulgation of a new law, and ought to have an instant and far greater effect upon tythe proctors, than a vote of the House of Commons, declaratory of the sense of the House, ordering them, at their peril, not to tythe fat Bullocks and Cows. Vide p. 4. Some will say, perhaps, these are trifles, not worth the attention of Government; trifles, I acknowledge, they are, in comparison to the oppressions by the
great

great Tythes in the way they are taken; but let me admonish those who conceive these petty exactions to be *trifles*, to consider what great consequences have arisen from trifling causes. In the language of Mr. Windham, who said, in the House of Commons, Dec. 31, 1798.

“ I wish not to possess that species of philosophy which teaches to despise *trifling* things, however they might be connected with great ones: on the contrary, I see great things arising out of those that were apparently *little*. Indeed the whole system of human nature shews how attentive we ought to be to those things called *trifles*; since the existence of human life frequently depends upon them. If therefore this doctrine was applicable to the safety of the human frame, how could it be otherwise with regard to human institutions.”

POSTSCRIPT.

MUCH *pro* and *con* has lately appeared relative to an Union between Ireland and Great Britain. I have read but few arguments on either side, but the knowledge I have of the people of Ireland induces me to venture an opinion, that if Ministers are serious in bringing about an Union, and do not first tranquillize the Peasantry by an union of interests, and of sentiment in their religious concerns, they may find they began at the wrong end of the business. On the contrary, if they would *secularize the clergy* altogether; indemnifying the present possessors of Tythes and Ecclesiastical Dues, I think an Union might be more peaceably effected; and estates would probably rise from 18 to 30 years' purchase; not, I presume, if the *appellant jurisdiction* is to remain in Ireland; the bringing it back from England lowered the value 8 years' purchase at least. The true cause of estates falling, the friends of the measure would not admit; they attributed the depression to a cause not at that time existing, the riotous conduct of the lower order of the people. The country has never been perfectly tranquil, on account of Tythes, but the disturbances then in Ireland were not greater than usual. See p. 8.

But let me check myself. As I said before, I wish not to discuss *political* points: all I contend for is, an amelioration of the wretched condition of the Roman Catholics, and what concerns the *moral government*; the safety and TRANQUILLIZATION of the whole people of Ireland.

ANECDOTES.

ANECDOTES.

Some of the gentry of Ireland are miserably poor indeed*! I could give a variety of curious instances of this fact; I have often been obliged to accept Drafts in payment, for so small a sum as *one guinea and a half*, from the members of the *Jocky Club* in Ireland, upon other members of the same society, on the score of *sweepstakes* and *bets*, at horse races. About sixty or seventy of these *sportsmen*, whose debts altogether amounted to not more than 200*l.* which sum, not being worth the time and expence it would require to collect it, was totally lost, and occasioned me more trouble, anxiety, and vexation, than I had with twelve hundred other customers.

Two of these drafts are now in my possession, having never been honoured with payment. I do not copy them with an invidious intention, but merely to authenticate my own assertion, and to shew, by real documents, the impoverished state of Ireland.

The first draft I shall present the reader with, is one given me by Thomas O'Conner of *Miltown*, Esq. of the county of Roscommon, on Francis Heny, at Mullingar, in the county of Westmeath, at least 50 miles distant from Miltown, and 120 from my own residence, which was then in Donegal.

"S I R,

"Miltown, July 13, 1781.

"Please to pay to Mr. William Bingley or Order, the
"Sum of One Pound, Fourteen Shillings and a Penny Halfpenny, and
"place it to the Account of

"THOMAS O'CONNER."

"Mr. Francis Heny, Mullingar."

It was in vain to urge that this draft would never be of the smallest use to me; that if O'Conner had not so much cash, perhaps he might procure it in the neighbourhood; he replied, if so much money would save him from damn——n he could not borrow it within twenty miles from where he sat; he then dismissed me between three and four o'clock without dinner, or a feed of corn for my horse. The poverty of this gentleman was real, and no way delusive, for in all the neighbouring towns and villages round about him, I could not procure as much goods on the draft as would make me a pair of breeches, nor could I get rid of it, even at 50 per cent. discount.

* Which occasioned me to say, Preface, p. iii, "*with few exceptions.*"

The following year I called at *Corbally*, in the county of Galway, for another small sum. Mr. Blake was more hospitable than Mr. O'Conner, for he kept me two days as a visitor, and hereby gave rest to my horse without expence. Mr. B. then told me, he had been able only to procure me one guinea the whole time I had been there, which he paid me, and, to my astonishment, the following draft for the remainder, which, considering on whom it was drawn, renders it of the two, the more curious:

" S I R,

" Corbally, Octr. 11th. 1782.

" Pray pay Mr. Willm. Bingley, or Order, on demand,

" One Pound, Fourteen Shillgs. and Three Halfpence, Ster. value reced.

" wch. will be so much of Ten Guineas wch. you owe me these Three

" Years past, for yr. Stakes at Ballinaslo, wch. I won with my horse Ireland,

" and which you promised by yr. several Letters in my Hand, to pay before

" now, and am, Sir,

" Your most Obt. Sert.

" P. BLAKE.

" To Thos. O'Connor, Esq. Miltown."

The *Miltowns* were ever unfortunate to me. I had a note of hand from Mr. Chambers, of *Miltown*, in the county of Mayo, for thirty-six shillings. I was on my last tour three years afterwards, and he kept me five days, much against my inclination. It happened to be the time of Easter, and on the fourth day (*Sunday*) we received the sacrament together in his own parlour, (there being no church in the parish) and after the service was ended, and the communicants had withdrawn, Mr. C. said to me, "Have you my note?" I replied, "I have;" he then said, "By the blessed bread and wine we have just received, I have been able to collect but twenty-four shillings." Upon the whole, the small deficiency here, was less to be regretted than the loss of time. At Miltown in the county of Kerry, I was served pretty much in the same way as at Miltown in the county of Roscommon.

Poor Mr. Blake, when he saw how much I was embarrassed on beholding the draft on *Tom O'Connor*, (which a little surprised me) a tear trickled down his cheek; Mr. B. amongst a variety of other sensible observations, said, speaking, I suppose, for himself and his brethren of the *sod*, "Ireland is the poorest country, I believe, under the sun."

F I N I S.

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

A SCRAP OF IRISH HISTORY, PARTLY WITHIN MY OWN REMEMBRANCE †.

Page 7. line 13. *after* Art of the Presbyterians, *add* and other Republicans.—And I omitted, in the above Page, to notice a material Fact, which does honour to the parties mentioned, viz. that in the year 1745, not one *Irish* Presbyterian was found amongst the Scotch rebels. *Vide* Address, of that Body, to Lord Chesterfield, then Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and his Lordship's Answer. Nor, were any of the *Irish* Catholic peasantry in the same *unprovoked* Rebellion: on the contrary, the *peasantry*, then in the English Army, freely bled, fighting, with the utmost gallantry, for the House of Brunswick. The rich Catholics as freely contributed and associated for the Cause of the King. During the American War, they made a loan, *unasked*, of a large Sum of Money to Government, when the public Treasury was quite exhausted, to enable the commander in chief to form a Camp in Munster.

Certain Publications, about the *Rights of Man*, it must be confessed, have been productive of much Discontent in Ireland; but whether the *Duke of Richmond's Rights of Man*, or those of Mr. Paine, have done most Mischief, would puzzle a wiser head than mine to determine. The Duke's Letter to Mr. Sbarman, concerning *Universal Suffrage** was in Circulation some Years before Paine's *Rights of Man* were thought of; and, as coming from an *English Duke* it operated the more violently, especially upon the discontented of every Denomination. About this time the Protestants sought every Opportunity to bring about a Union with the Roman Catholics. Mr. Paine's *Strictures*, grounded upon the Duke's principles, only acted as would fresh Fuel added to a Fire *already kindled*. My business in this Essay is to set the truth in a proper Light, and to shew the exact Causes as far as I am able, of the discontents of the People of Ireland. Having stated the fact, the Reader will make his own Comment.

The Union that has subsisted amongst the People of Ireland, during the Wars of 1755 and 1775, and their Zeal in the Cause of their Sovereign, (even in 1745, when *young Stuart* was in Britain and making his way to the Throne,) are the best possible Proofs of the Loyalty and Character of the Irish Nation; and that the Apprehensions, that Roman Catholics would not keep Faith with Protestants were they emancipated, but endeavour to overturn the Constitutions of both Kingdoms, *without a legislative union*, must appear from the above recited facts, and a variety of others which I have not room to insert, visionary and groundless.

Have Protestants always kept faith with Roman Catholics? *Vide* the Treaty of Limerick; those Articles of Capitulation, solemnly signed and sealed by King William, were afterwards violated by Queen Anne, and Laws enacted against them, written in Characters of Blood. The Roman Catholics owed no Allegiance to Queen Anne, but have borne true Allegiance to the House of Brunswick; even with the Cruel Laws of Anne afflicting them. But, say some Writers, and *Parliament men*, they are now in open Rebellion: and "Men with Arms in their Hands, can only be subdued with Force." What! *all* the Roman Catholics of Ireland

† Borlase, Temple, and Clarendon, have no Charms for me to admire; they all wrote Irish History; in describing the Roman Catholics they have given only the dark side of the Picture; perhaps, from no very honourable Motive; it was the Practice formerly for *Lords Justices* of Ireland to impeach as many Roman Catholics as they could; to shut them without the pale of the Law; and thus aggrandize themselves and Families with *forfeited Estates*. The Part the Roman Catholics took in 1641, it ought to be noticed, was in *defence* of the King.

* Even for *Women to Vote*, Universal Suffrage is a Doctrine too absurd even for the French Revolutionists to adopt.

in Rebellion*? If this was the Case the Protestants, protected as they are by a large Army, would soon be overpowered. Those who have taken up the Sword, let them die by the Sword; but the great Body of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, it is hoped, are not to suffer for the Indiscretion and wicked Practices of the few in comparison, who have joined the Republicans. "The Tythe Laws, in Ireland," says Mr. Pitt, "are a great practical Evil; and the Religious Establishment in Ireland runs counter to all others†; but the further Discussion of this Subject must be deferred untill a Union." Why? "Because we are fearful of another Invasion of that Kingdom by the French." To this I reply, If you are afraid of Invasion, seek not to frighten or to fight the Enemy with a Legislative Union. You will defeat all the Designs of Invaders more effectually by bringing about that kind of Union, which always has defeated them. Let it never be forgotten, Englishmen, that when the great Marshal Broglio was at Brest, during the last War with France, with 20,000 chosen Troops nearly ready to embark for Ireland, the great unanimity prevailing in Ireland, amongst all Degrees and Persuasions, to oppose the common Enemy, determined the Court of Versailles to lay aside that Expedition. But a short Time before the French Ambassador's delivery of his Rescript to the Court of London, a Motion had been made in the House of Commons of Ireland, in Order to obtain some indulgences for the Roman Catholics, which Motion was indignantly rejected, almost unanimously§. In about a Fortnight afterwards, mark the Change! the News having arrived that the French Rescript had been laid before the Parliament of England, Mr. Gardner, the late Lord Mountjoy, moved for some Relief for the Roman Catholics, all which was granted by as great a Majority! A Measure that operated like a Thunderbolt in France, whose Object then was to sever Ireland from England. A Union of Interest produces Unanimity of Sentiment, a kind of Weapon the best adapted for any Country, as Experience has shewn, to intimidate, or, even completely to defeat the Designs of an invading Enemy.

April 3, 1799.

W. B.

For Accounts of the foregoing Narrative see the Monthly Review for February, the New Review and the Gentleman's Magazine for March, also the British Critic for March; to the Editors of which, latter Publication I return my grateful acknowledgements for their good wishes for my Success, more especially as coming from them. A Reviewer to complain of *Extracts* ‡! If a Person is liable to censure for making *Extracts* to illustrate his Subject; confirm his Reasoning, and Argument, by Authorities; few new Books need be written and printed: In that Case, what would poor Reviewers do for *Extracts*?---Make it out, as they too often do, with "story telling," without authorities.

A KICK FOR A BITE. W. B.

In Preface, p. vi. line 8. after William III. add or to the still more cruel laws of Queen Anne.

- Page 15. --- 11. for would taken, read would be taken.
 --- 18. --- 2. after same, dele the comma.
 --- 19. --- 14. for English made, read English have made.
 --- 18. --- 17. for his, read is.
 --- 29. --- 8. for who as, read who has.



* Two Millions Two Hundred Thousand is the latest estimated Number of Roman Catholics in Ireland; in which Calculation all our Writers and Senators agree.

† Mr. Pitt may have learnt this from my comparison, (Preface p. v.); he is the first Minister of State who ever declared so much against Tythes, as applicable to the poor Roman Catholics of Ireland, or expressed so tender a feeling on account of their religion.

§ The Members went that Day to Parliament with Orange Cockades in their Hats, and they dressed up their Servants with the same party-coloured Foolery.

‡ *Extracts* from books out of print, are oftentimes exceedingly acceptable and useful to those who wish for true information; but the black-coated regiment belonging to the British Critic, perhaps, complain that I have given too much information, and that giving an Extract from my Narrative would be acting against the feeling of Nature; they are too cautious to be caught, like Mice, in a Trap.